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Model Railroad News

The All-Scale News Monthly

Return of a Thoroughbred

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Using Semaphores to add realism to layouts without wiring headaches

Volume 15, Issue 9 • September 2009

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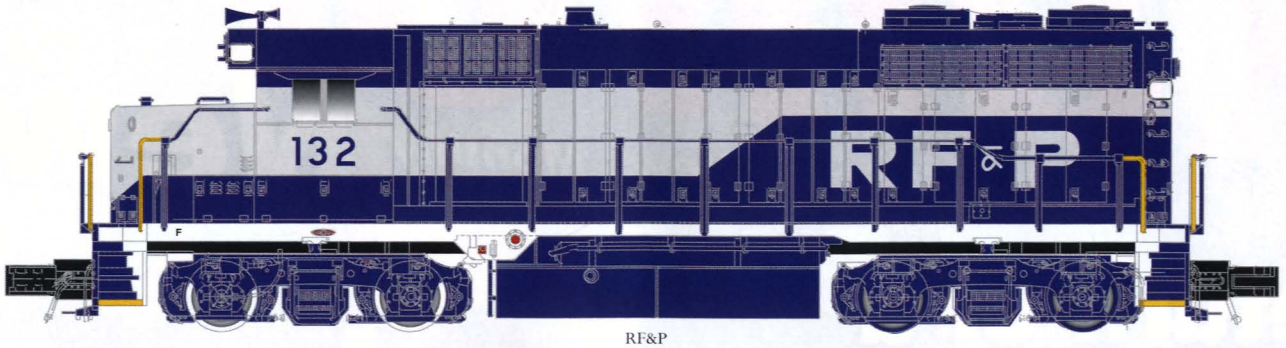

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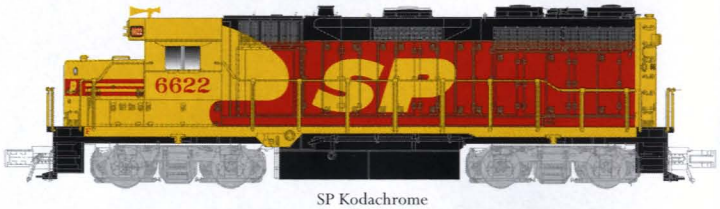
Seaboard*



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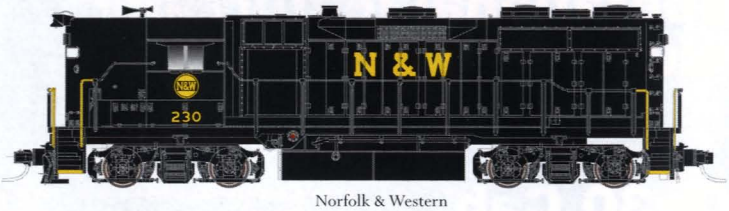

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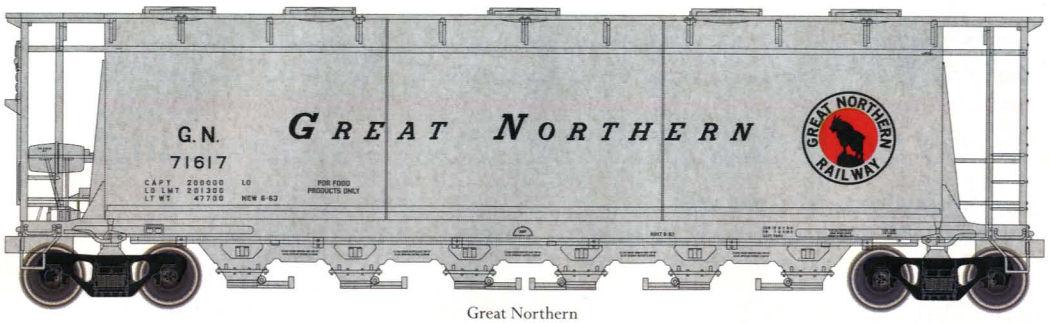
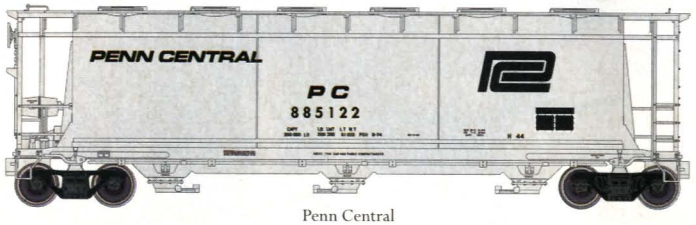


Great Northern

American Potash

Florida Tile



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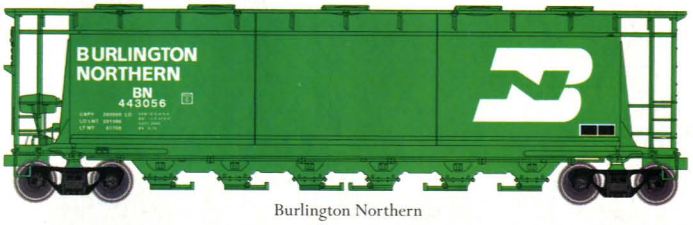

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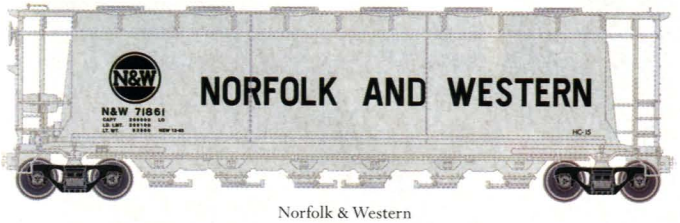

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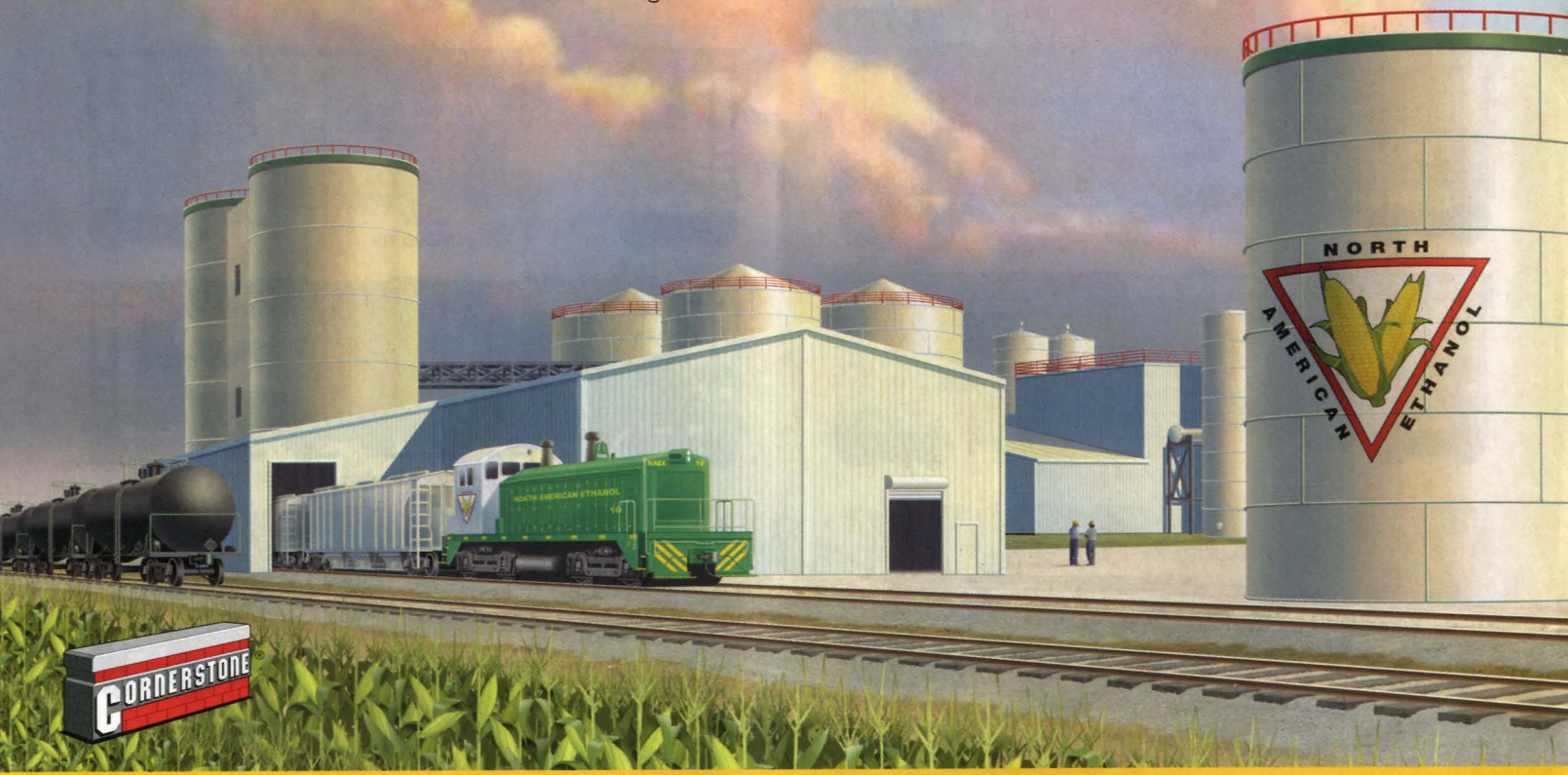

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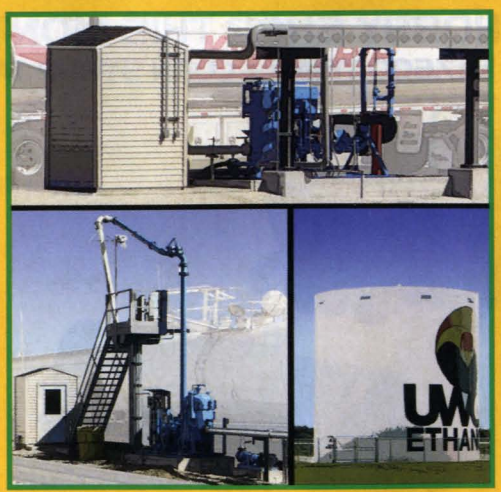

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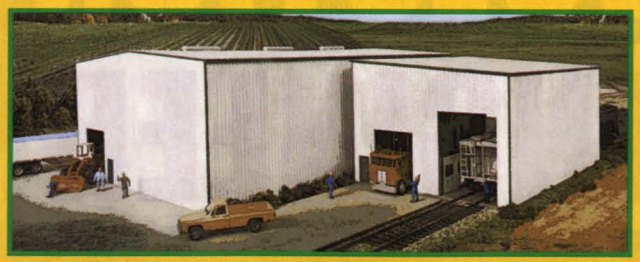

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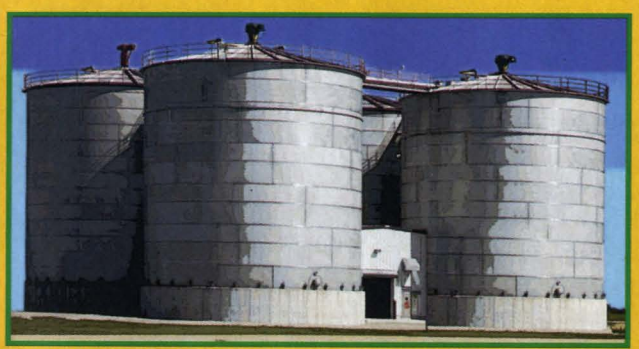

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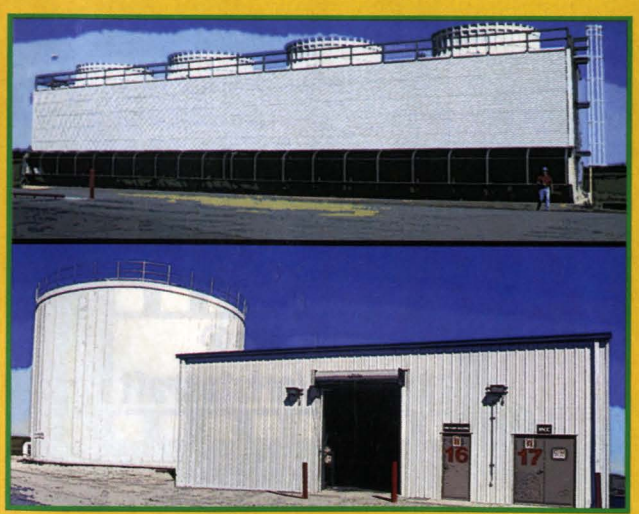

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HO GOLD LINE TRINITY 30,145-GALLON TANK CAR
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The Ethanol Industry from Field to Fuel Tank

With ethanol plants sprouting across the continent, railroads have been enjoying a surge of traffic. Ethanol plants convert corn into ethanol and dried distillers grain with solubles (DDGS). Railroads haul corn and gasoline to the plants, and finished ethanol and DDGS to fuel terminals and feed mills.

Did You Know?

About 70% of the gasoline sold in the U.S. contains 10% ethanol. At over 130 billion gallons consumed each year, that's about 9 billion gallons of ethanol and its use is increasing. And railroads haul the majority of it!

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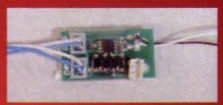
CRE57072 - SMOKE BOARD

CRE57076 - CAPACITOR BOARD

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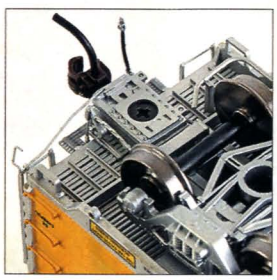

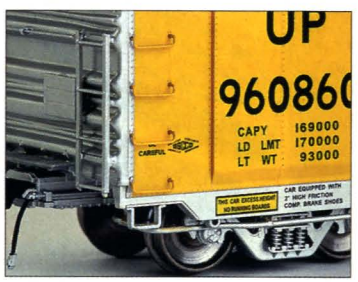

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- PC
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- WP

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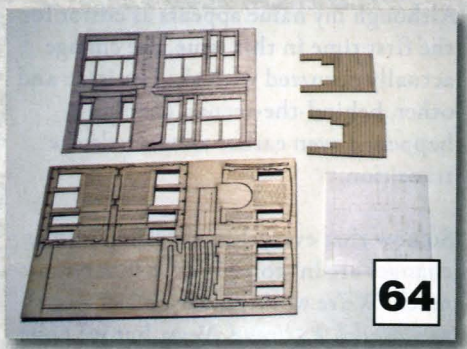

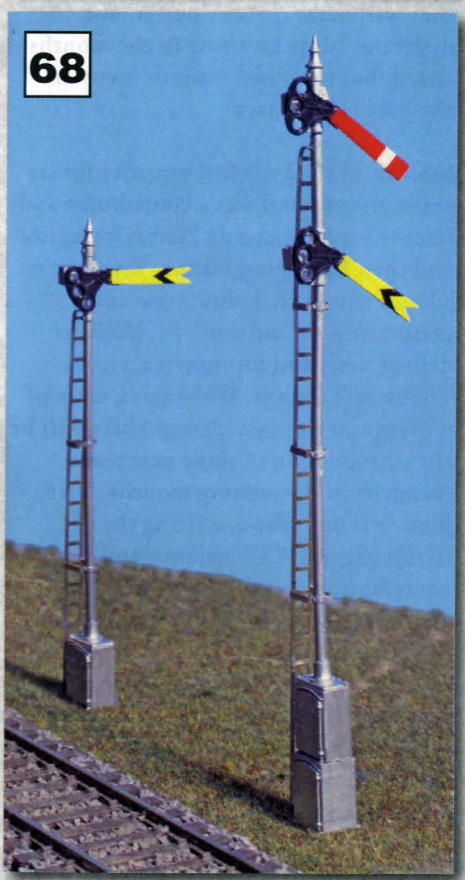

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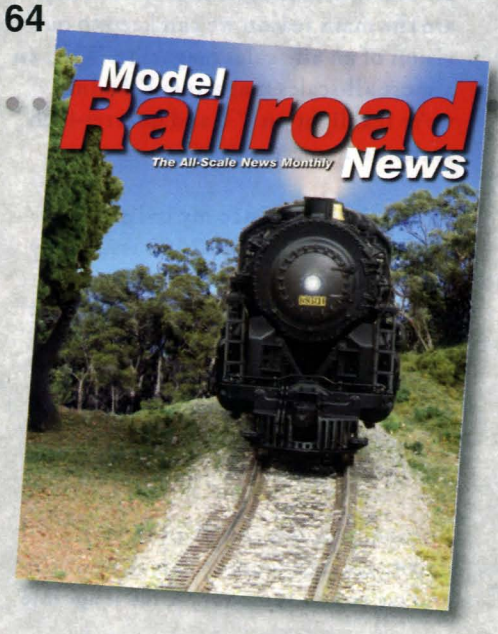
Atlas O GP7 brings true American icon to O scale— 36

Banta Modelworks Cab Conversion kit adds new loco to rosters for under $20 — 64

About The Cover:
Filling in for an ailing diesel-electric, New York Central's venerable Hudson number 5391 takes the point on a modern Streamliner in the late 1940s. Broadway Limited has recently reissued their HO-scale version of this famous 4-6-4 type with enhanced Paragon 2 command control and sound electronics, plus a newly developed functioning synchronized smoke unit.
— Photo by David Otte



Editorial A Little Change

My desk is home to an ever changing, but always interesting, assortment of items. Sharing space with my iMac at the moment are a Micro-Trains SD40-2 in Z scale, a couple of American Z Line hoppers, Preiser figures in HO and N, Bachmann Branchline figures in G and N, vehicles in HO and N, and a nifty little N-scale structure from Graham Farish. Scattered around the country, *MRN* writers are checking out products from N to Large scale in several of its ratios. Dave Otte and Dick Karnes are covering Hi-Rail and AC as well as scale products in O and S. Dave also does a great job with Märklin HO, covering European-prototype trains.

Model Railroad News, as the title suggests, started out back in 1995 as a news and new product publication carrying mostly announcements with little true editorial material. At the time, Publisher Mike Lindsay made the decision to cover the news of all the major model railroading scales. Over the years, the magazine has evolved, adding reviews, columns, and the occasional series, like "Project DCC." We were (and still are) fortunate enough to attract writers who could produce thorough reviews including information about the prototype, how well the model lives up to the original, and how well it performs, in the case of locomotives and rolling stock. Best of all, we have writers who are interested in their scales because they are active modelers in that scale. They are the main reason we can keep to our vision of an all-scales magazine. Well, an almost all-scales magazine: I'll admit we're real light on TT and quarter-inch scales, to name a couple.

In the six years since my byline first appeared (in the June 2003 issue), my fellow contributors have gotten me interested in every scale. That variety of scales and equipment is one of the great things about model railroading and learning about each one is one of the great things about *Model Railroad News*.

But some readers complain we don't devote enough room to this scale or that and we've had some very knowledgeable people tell us we should focus on HO and N, the major scales. HO and N would certainly provide us with enough material to fill the magazine and likely enough readers to support it. Mike, John Sipple, and I have discussed this several times since I became the managing editor a few years back, but we have always come to the same conclusion: that original decision is still the best choice.

Publications are like a long-running play: the script doesn't change but sometimes the actors do. Phil Scandura, whose "Project DCC" series ends with the final installment in this issue, has left *MRN* to have some time to actually enjoy his trains and build a layout, though he promises to make an appearance from time to time. Steven Goehring, who was one of our "TAMR" columnists, has moved up to become our new associate editor and has taken over the "N-Depth" column. Steven will still be riding herd on the "TAMR" column and has gotten off to a good start with Jeffrey Andreski, who is already getting favorable reader comments. Last month, for the first time, we added our editorial assistants, Katie Lindsay and Wendy Cawthon, to the masthead. Katie and Wendy are our beat reporters; they contact the manufacturers and scour the web for new product information. They turn the material into readable prose and turn it in to News Editor Jennifer Lindsay (who is so much more than a news editor).

This month, for the first time, we're making a change at the top of the masthead. After seven years, John Sipple decided it was time to really retire for the umpteenth time (in the past, John has retired from teaching, from being a member of a band, and from being a columnist for another publication, among other things) and devote time to travel, his granddaughter, and playing with trains. You'll be glad to know John's retirement from *Model Railroad News* is really more of a semi-retirement. Basically, he's retired from having to do all the editorial work to serve as our Editor Emeritus, which means he can write about what he wants to write about.

Although my name appears as editor for the first time in this issue, the change actually occurred with the last issue and other, behind-the-scenes, changes happened even earlier as we made the transition.

So now that everything is official, what changes are in store? Well, a lot and not much. We're working on some changes to *Model Railroad News*, but we hope they will make *MRN* better, not different. More on those in the months ahead, but for now I want to focus on the "not much" part.

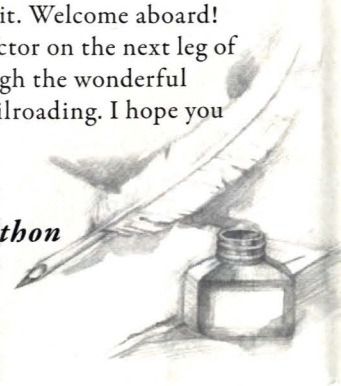
John and I have worked together for six years, first when I was a contributor and later when I became an Associate Editor and then Managing Editor. We agree on a lot of things including style and continuing the mission of *MRN* to deliver news and top-notch reviews. That won't change. We've got a team of writers and the only change there will be the introduction of some new team members in the coming months. Even John will be around, writing the "Thinking of DCC" column and contributing reviews, opinions, and anything else he thinks might be handy.

One change will be found in the letters section. I'll answer those letters I can, but when a reader has a question about a specific review or product, I will try to have the reviewer respond. It's my feeling this approach will better serve you, our readers, and make things more interesting.

Me? When I'm not wielding the digital blue pencil, I can still be found every month at the "Grade Crossing." Of course, I'll be doing my share of reviews. After all, it wouldn't be much fun if I didn't get to run trains now and then.

So there you have it. Welcome aboard! I'll be your conductor on the next leg of our journey through the wonderful world of model railroading. I hope you enjoy the ride.

— By Bill Cawthon



A Legendary Powerhouse

Every once in a while a locomotive is built that becomes a standard by which everything else is measured. The EMD SD40-2 is just that. All over the nation, railroads have relied on the performance and affordability of this heavy freight hauler for decades. Now, you can have this same performance and affordability in HO scale with the Athearn® Ready To Roll® SD40-2 locomotives.

These down-to-the-last-detail engines come in five roadnames with upgraded tooling and separately applied parts like grab irons, handrails and air tanks. But what we think you'll love the most are the prototype-specific features like the NS/Maersk and Wisconsin & Southern paint schemes, accurate nose lengths, grilles, fans, exhaust stacks, pilot details, truck sideframes and many more.

For more information about these models, visit **www.Athearn.com**. Be sure to subscribe to Athearn News, our email newsletter, to stay up-to-date with the latest Athearn product information, including new releases.

NS/Maersk paint scheme

Wisconsin & Southern paint scheme

READY TO ROLL TRAINS Athearn IN MINIATURE

BNSF newly tooled nose light

C&NW newly tooled nose bell

OTHER AVAILABLE MODELS					HO SD40-2
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95257	BNSF H1 #6854 with ATSF modified nose light, 123" nose	$99.98	95265	Rock Island #4795, 81" nose	$99.98
95258	BNSF H1 #6859 with ATSF modified nose light, 123" nose	$99.98	95200	Undecorated, 81" nose (rerun)	$99.98
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95266	NS/Maersk Sealand #3329, 88" nose	$109.98	95226	Undecorated, 88" nose (rerun)	$99.98
95260	C&NW #6824 with gong bell, 81" nose	$99.98*			

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Fresh From The RPO Car

Car Float Follow-up

The Car Float Kits article (*MRN* July 09) was fascinating. One question came to mind. What railroad had the largest long-term year round "railroad navy" operation? Not just the number of tugs, floats, and lighters, but number of runs daily over how many nautical miles and, very importantly, the number of freight cars floated annually. I've got a hunch it was the NH with interchange point being Greenville, NJ on the PRR, not Bay Ridge. Another Q (Too many questions probably) that came to mind is what railroad float/lighter route was the most challenging? Perhaps that through Hell Gate to reach NH's Oak Point from the rest of NY Harbor. Although some would maintain that just navigating NY Harbor water traffic in its glory days would have been the most challenging!

One omission modelers need to know: Not mentioned in the article is that (to my operating knowledge), with rare exception, floats and ferries were loaded by the locomotive reaching onto the float with idler cars (flat cars). The only way an engine was allowed on a float or small ferry, to my knowledge, was on the center track... and then very carefully!

In my employment as an Operator for five different railroads (terminating in '79), I did work two ferry locations. C&O Ludington (covered there two weeks, but was too busy to watch them load!) and C&O Port Huron.

MRN is the only model mag I read. Something about it, the blend of prototypical information and model application, along with your all scale coverage (Even if your new S-scale man ignores so-called Hi-Rail... And the previous man did not, even running a long note about my own operations). Great stuff, John! Thank you.

Bruce K. Heald
Rutland, VT

Dear Bruce:

I did try to outline the operations of carfloating in my review, but this was, in fact, a kit review. The operation of locomotives on various float aprons did utilize idler cars. Often several MOW gondolas or even specially equipped cars with stand up handrails for crewmembers, as the CNJ had, were used to prevent the need of the heavy engine moving onto the floatbridge (apron) or the float itself. You are correct that engines stayed off the float aprons in order to avoid unbalancing them: More cars over the years were dumped into the briny deep due to problems at the float bridge than ever went off the floats while under way. Engines were, however, used to depress the float aprons to match the level of the floats rather than try to fine-tune the floatbridge with hand or even motor controls. This was even documented as far back as the 1920s by (John A.) Droge in his book Freight Trains and Terminals.

It is difficult to say who had the greatest number of actual operations, but in terms of cars moved, the only source I have is the Thomas Flagg pair of New York Harbor Railroads. *There is a diagram issued by the Tri State Transportation Committee,* Rail Freight of the Tri State Region, August 1967 *and showing the Fall 1964 movements of eastbound railroad cars through the harbor district. The diagram shows 4,225 cars moved out of New Jersey moving through the harbor district daily.*

Of the 1,049 cars interchanged daily by carfloat en route eastwards (meaning beyond New York City), 197 cars moved via New Haven at Oak Point, in the Bronx, while 398 moved via the LIRR and NY Connecting Railroad to New England points which means via the New Haven RR. (Via Hell Gate Route as far as New Rochelle, thence New Haven RR). Arrows indicate on the diagram, 5 and 39 more cars that appear to originate on Long Island and move through the NY. Connecting Railroad to the New Haven RR.

Elsewhere in Volume I, it indicates that Greenville (which at its peak moved 2,160 cars a day in the 1940s) still moved over 300 cars a day as late as 1963. This was most probably the busiest of the carfloat terminals, but I don't have any exact figures other than what I have cited. I would not consider this diagram to be absolutely accurate as it indicated average daily car flow, but it probably does correctly show the proportion of traffic in the operations indicated.

As far as the most challenging route, I have spent time going across on a tug between Brooklyn and Greenville way after the glory years, and the channels of New York Bay, which are virtually invisible, and indicated only by channel markers, are already complicated to navigate even in good weather are far worse in storms or the short days of wintertime: Even without the heavy traffic of bygone times, the ever-present tides complicate matters on this "simple" straight-across route: Carfloating off Cape Charles which is actually out into the ocean and you have to tow your float behind you for risk of having it overturn onto your tug — and the routings across San Francisco Bay on SP, Western Pacific, and Santa Fe had their share of challenges too. This is not to discount the Great Lakes or route across the Gulf of Mexico or other carfloat/car ferry runs, so I believe this is mostly a matter of opinion. I doubt any of these operations were any kind of "paid vacations" for the people who worked them!

I hope this is helpful to you. –Victor Roseman

We lose a reader

Greetings: I have been a loyal subscriber to *MRN* for several years, and wanted to let you know why I am not renewing my subscription. It has nothing to do with the economy or my job status, but is directly related to your editorial content.

First, the reviews of vehicles by Mr. Cawthon have wandered way off track. For several months, the reviews have provided extensive coverage of European vehicles. It is hard to believe that there are not American models more deserving of reviews than rarely seen European vehicles such as the Ape or the Neoplan Metroliner bus. In addition, it appears that Mr. Cawthon has developed a strong bias for the very small number of River Point Station vehicles; his glowing reviews drone on and on and are not objective.

Second, the content of the magazine seems to be drifting away from reviews and news to include "how-to" articles. The ongoing DCC project is particularly tedious and exemplifies the type of articles that are not in the normal scope that readers have come to expect.

I regret that your content has caused me to not renew, but perhaps these comments will help you understand my reasons.

G. Taft DeVere
Colorado Springs, CO

Dear Mr. DeVere,

I am sorry you are not renewing your subscription to Model Railroad News *but I appreciate your taking the time to write and I feel I owe you a response.*

Looking back at the vehicle reviews we have published since the beginning of the year, I don't see any particular bias towards European cars. We have reviewed models of American-prototype vehicles from Classic Metal Works, Athearn, Welly, and Norscot, as well as the models from River Point Station. The Neoplan was included because its prototype was sold in America, meaning it was a usable modern HO bus model, something that is in short supply. The Piaggio Ape was of interest because it could be used as a stand-in for the nonexistent ready-to-run models of American three-wheel trucks. The column that featured the Brekina models actually focused on the company's announcement of two new American-prototype models, a 1970 Camaro and a 1959 El Camino, and the possibility we might not be able to get them in the U.S.

I will say one of the problems we have had so far this year is lack of really new American models. Several products that should have already been released are overdue and some manufacturers, like Malibu International and RBI Motormax, haven't announced any new HO American products at all.

As far as any "bias" towards the River Point Station models, I would contend that it's simply recognition the RPS models are a step above most other HO vehicle replicas. In fact, one of the reasons for the relative lack of variety is the care Ron Elsdoerfer takes to make sure his products are as accurate as possible. I would invite you to make your own comparison. This definitely is not to say other models are not quality products (if you want me to "drone on" about a model, get me started on the Athearn '55 Fords, Ricko's exquisite 1931 Lincoln, or Masterpiece's beautiful Chrysler Airflow), but I know of at least two very competent suppliers that have had difficulties meeting RPS standards.

The final installment of Project DCC is in this issue. It was worthwhile and we have had many positive comments, but we're going to be sticking more to our standard content in the future.

Once again, I do regret that you're not renewing; we have some good stuff in the hopper. But I hope my response has given you some insight. –Bill

(Editor's Note: Mr. Devere did remind me of the white-metal Cushman Truckster kits from JL Innovative Designs. No. 924 is a Cushman Truckster and No. 925 is the Truckster with trailer carts. I appreciate the correction.)

Dullcote Dilemma

I had a weird result from using Dullcote on custom decals that I was applying to an unpainted ConCor N-scale M1000 train set. Everything worked fine on the first side of the train set, but on the second side, when I sprayed the Dullcote on the three cars, the spray on the motorcar was okay, but the spray on the two passenger cars suddenly turned white, including on the windows. I was not successful in cleaning up the white spray with water, but I was able to do so with alcohol. The decals appeared not to be damaged. It was really odd, with the motorcar spray remaining clear, but the two cars on the same side, turning white.

Any thoughts? I'm a little concerned about using the Dullcote on other decal jobs.

Robert Conrad
Beachwood, OH

Based on my own experience, Dullcote is sensitive to temperature, moisture, and humidity. If your decals were not completely set and dried, the remaining moisture may have caused the problem you encountered.

Most of the time, Dullcote works very well and is one of the staples of my workbench. –Bill

Packaging Protest

I saw in the June issue of *Model Railroad News* that you gave a brief mention about the new Walthers Proto 2000 E7 locos now available and thought I would just add my thoughts/comments on the locomotive.

I am based in England, United Kingdom, and got into American railroad modeling after seeing a Proto F7 unit on display and being immediately taken in by its superb quality and attention to detail in every aspect.

I looked through the options available at the time and chose to model the Great Northern and within a month had purchased an F7A and F7B set and full compliment of accompanying cars. When I saw that Proto 2000 were bringing out the E7 I began to put my hard-earned savings aside to purchase this beauty when it was released for the Great Northern.

At the beginning of June my model (920-40961) number 512A duly arrived and my first impressions were of the fact that I had to complete the assembly by fitting certain items, including the body shell. However, once assembled, the loco did not now fit in either of the slots in the preformed box, thereby leaving me with the options of having to remove the body shell after every operating session, which would eventually lead to an ill-fitting or broken body, or to modify the box the loco was supplied in. I chose to modify the box and at best I now have a "reasonable" case in which to keep my loco having had to slice the bottom half of the box off and to install a solid piece of packing foam. I also had one of the wind deflectors missing which was a big disappointment as this had not been picked up by Quality Control before shipment.

I contacted Walthers about both issues and was told that the body was left off to prevent damage during shipping but I find this hard to believe and the more plausible reason is that further assembly of the loco was required by the purchase before use and saved them build costs. Walthers did ship me a replacement wind deflector, but upon arrival it had a silver frame as opposed to the Pullman green frame on the other wind deflector, so this will require further work on my behalf to correct. Walthers told me all the wind deflectors are silver when made so someone in China must have a nice job painting these everyday for the GN locos before shipment!

It was interesting to note on page 30 of your publication how Athearn now packs their locomotives, of which I also have a good selection of their products and not a single issue with any of them, or their packing.

The bottom line here, John, is that when locos were $50 to $100 each and considered more toys than precision models then cheap packaging was fine, but now that they are $250 and very detailed it is imperative that the investment lavished on these models is recognized and properly designed packaging is supplied with them to ensure their safe keeping.

Whilst the Athearn packaging might take a bit of work to get into I know

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what I would prefer to see my investment kept in.

Grumpy in England with a broken new E7A.

Bob Powell
London, England

Hi, Bob,

While I am never treated with factual accounts regarding packaging decisions, the packaging itself combines with the company's packaging history to reveal quite a bit. First, before we delve into the history, I must relate that a number of modelers of my acquaintance have expressed their dissatisfaction with BOTH methods of packaging. The divided process used by Walthers has a history going back to their Life-Like Proto 2000 locos. For as much as it was reputed to protect the model in transit, several hobby shop workers suggested it might have been done that way in order to compel the new buyer to confront the wonderful innards. However, when the model was assembled, the packaging was useless for transporting the model. For a while, the new Walthers' deliveries went to a more ordinary and perfectly reliable assembled model. For whatever reason, they have reverted to the old system.

Athearn has no history of its own regarding the board, but it has its own caveats. If not removed from the packaging properly, you can easily end up with a damaged model. Once the board is removed, the loco no longer fits snugly into the Styrofoam and the board is of no help whatever. We've seen at least one that was so tightly bound to the board that the loco was damaged in the process of literally cutting it from the board. More common has been the times when the loco arrived loose in the box, having become disconnected either partially or fully from the board. The result was invariably a severely damaged model. In defense of the packaging, some have stated that this board mounting is common enough in large scales, particularly O Gauge. I have heard hobby shop workers complain that all of their customers expect to run the loco in the shop prior to taking it home, and that process requires tools and time, and then comes the issue of either remounting it to the board or sending the customer home with the model loose in the box.

To both Athearn and the Life-Like diehards, I would like to point out that many products on the market are far more expensive, have far more delicate detail and yet are wrapped in plastic and then settled into Styrofoam inserts that take care of the model from China to your house and from there back and forth to the club layout. As with any industry, it is necessary to not just understand why a person might buy your product but also why they might decide not to purchase another. Many hobby shops are located in hardware stores, and if a person has had a bad experience with the packaging on a three hundred dollar locomotive, instead of buying another one, he may drift off down the power tool aisle. –John

Terraplane Blues

Bill,

As you seem to be the wizard apparent relating to HO vehicular models, therefore I pose this sorry tale to you...

A while back there was, I'm sure it was in *Model Railroad News*, an article telling about some newly available HO-scale Hudson or Terraplane cars of the mid '30s. Having been a high school 1936 Terraplane coupe owner in the late '40s and early '50s I was absolutely overjoyed! I copied the page from the magazine for future reference before passing the magazine on to my Air Force son.

The plot either thickens or starts to fall apart about here. Depends on how you look at it... or not. He read the mag and passed it on to someone else.

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Time passes...

I decided it was time for me to get off my butt, get a coupe to trim up to look like mine did. (You can see this one coming a mile away.) Cannot find the copied page! Mumble, mumble, curse!

I asked son if he still had the magazine with the Hudson car announcement. He does not. Rats!

Do you happen to remember, or have a method of finding out, which issue it was in? I would surely buy a back issue, if available, to get the article and manufacturer's name and etc.

Pleading either absolute dumbness or simply flaky memory. Thanks for your efforts.

And, yes, I actually do read "At The Grade Crossing" column first every month. Honest.

Typin' at Ya,

Lowell Ryder
Via E-mail

Hi, Lowell,

While I don't recall writing about a Hudson from the 1930s, it might have been a new product announcement and that would have been Jennifer Lindsay's bailiwick. In either case, the subject would have to have been one of the excellent Hudson resin kits from Sylvan Scale Models. Claire Gilbert makes a variety of vehicle models based on the 1937 Terraplane. For more information, including a dealer listing, visit the Sylvan web site at: www.isp.ca/Sylvan/default.htm. –Bill

Kudos for TAMR

I would like to compliment Jeffrey Andreski on his excellent article in the July Issue of *MRN*.

I am in my early 70s and have been modeling for over thirty years and exhibited at train shows in Calgary. This is a great time for our hobby with the advent of DCC and sound, something I could only dream about when I started. I agree that the Bachmann E-Z Command is a great starter system for the price, especially for a small layout.

I would also like to suggest that "Model Builder Software" by Evan Designs is an economical way to build structures from card. They even have a free printable design on their web site at www.ModelTrainSoftware.com. I bought mine at Caboose Hobbies on a visit to Denver in May this year. The price is reasonable, as are the add-on modules.

Graham Fenton,
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Thanks for writing, Graham. I agree Jeffrey is doing a great job with TAMR and I also want to thank Steven Goehring, our new Associate Editor, for bringing Jeffrey on board. I am hoping both will be with MRN *for a long time. –Bill*

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REVIEW N

Atlas' Newest Masterpiece: The 1932 ARA Boxcar

Perseverance Got Atlas through the First 60 Years, Quality will take them into the Future

This is a model from the Master Line Rolling Stock Series with very good detailing and crisp lettering. As of this writing, the boxcar was being offered in two body styles, with two roadnumbers for the Central of Georgia, Clinchfield, Missouri Pacific, Maine Central, and Warrior River Terminal. All of the boxcars are painted in the brown/white paint scheme. Additional cars should be available as you read this.

Review by Art Lake
Photos by Phil Scandura

Atlas Master Line Rolling Stock Series
1932 ARA Boxcar, Central of Georgia, Boxcar #4299 (#50 000 117); MSRP: $22.95
1932 ARA Boxcar, Undecorated (#50 000 114); MSRP: $17.95

Atlas Model Railroad Co. Inc
378 Florence Ave
Hillside, NJ 07205
www.atlasrr.com

BEFORE I get started, I just want to say: Congratulations on your 60th Anniversary, Atlas. It shows that your hard work and dedication has paid off. You are one of the most respected corporations in model railroading and your commitment to quality shows with your latest catalog and product releases.

One of Atlas's recent releases for October 2008 was their Master Line Rolling Stock series of the N-scale 1932 ARA boxcar, which demonstrates the kind of quality Atlas is committed to offer model railroaders. This boxcar features accurate painting and printing, friction-bearing trucks, AccuMate Couplers, and two different body style features. The first features a "Long tab" body, Murphy panel roof, and 4/4 dreadnaught ends. The second features a "Long tab" body, 11 panel flat riveted roof, and flat riveted ends. Currently offered in body style 1, with two roadnumbers each, are Central of Georgia, Clinchfield, Missouri Pacific, and Maine Central. They offer body style 2 with two roadnumbers in Warrior River Terminal. All of the boxcars are painted in the brown/white paint scheme.

Sometime during the summer of 2009, Atlas will be releasing the undecorated versions in both body styles and a body style 4. Is this the Viking roof? Also, they will add new roadnumbers for the Central of Georgia (1960s) and new roadnames Erie (1932 and 1947), Louisiana and Arkansas, Seaboard "Orange Blossom Special," and the famous 182500 Union Pacific (the only one that the Union Pacific owned) — all are decorated in the brown/white paint scheme. See your local hobby shop or visit Atlas' web site for the most recent offering of roadnames and numbers.

The 1932 ARA Boxcar

The American Railway Association (ARA) boxcar started in the 1920s with the development of the 1923 all-steel boxcar in hopes that all of the railroads would accept it as the standard boxcar. This did not happen until 1932 when the ARA designed and modified the 1927 boxcar. The 1932 boxcar design represented a significant landmark in freight car development. This design was the first time that there was change in outside height. The previous changes in inside height had been accomplished more or less by changing the height of the floor and using a thinner steel roof instead of a thick wood roof.

The 1932 ARA ushered in the use of tabbed side sills with a portion of the structural integrity of the car being in the sides, rather than the underframe. The ARA underframe used on the 1932 car became the standard for the subsequent iterations of the design, with little variation. However, the biggest outcome of the introduction of this car was the mass adoption among many different buyers that it created. While it had more variation among components than its offspring, it helped create the new circumstances whereby many railroads could buy a car of the same basic design, rather than each road having its own mechanical department's design. After testing and redefining, this design evolved into the 1937, modified 1937, and the postwar AAR boxcar.

Although not the most popular design numerically speaking, the 1932 ARA Standard boxcar is considered one of the most important designs in railroad history. It is hard to believe with all of the changing technologies that we have today, that the boxcars that we are accustomed to seeing on the railroad tracks today began rolling out of shops in the 1920s.

Central of Georgia Railroad

Our review sample, part No. 50 000 117, represents the Central of Georgia roadnumber 4299. Central of Georgia ordered 500 of the ARA-designed boxcars in 1937. These boxcars were numbered 4000 through 4499. In 1948, there were still 494 of these boxcars still in service.

The Central Rail Road and Canal Company was organized in 1833 by a group of Savannah businessmen who were concerned that Charleston's new railroad to Augusta would bring a loss of shipping business to their port. As a way to better attract investment capital, the railroad changed its name to Central Rail Road and Banking Company of Georgia. Troubles began in 1888 when the Richmond Terminal Company gained control of the railroad. The financial problems of the parent company

forced this railroad into bankruptcy and it was sold at foreclosure three years later. It was reorganized as Central of Georgia Railway on November 1, 1895.

Over the years the railroad either leased or acquired other railroads, and named two passenger trains after famous racing horses: Nancy Hanks and Man of War. In 1907, E. H. Harriman gained control of this railway and later sold it to the Illinois Central Railway, which Harriman also controlled. Illinois Central lost control of the railway in 1948. Frisco (St. Louis - San Francisco Railroad) bought it in 1956, which was not approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission, and then sold the railroad in 1961. In 1963, the C of G became a subsidiary of the Southern Railway, and in 1971, formed the Central of Georgia Railroad. Today, the railroad only exists as a paper railroad within the Norfolk and Southern Railway. Forty-two miles of former mainline track are leased to the Chattooga and Chickamauga Railway from the State of Georgia.

The lettering is crisp and readable under magnification. The other lettering on the boxcar has the owner, leased by name, and the builder information. Notice the build date. This is the date it was built and bought by Central of Georgia.

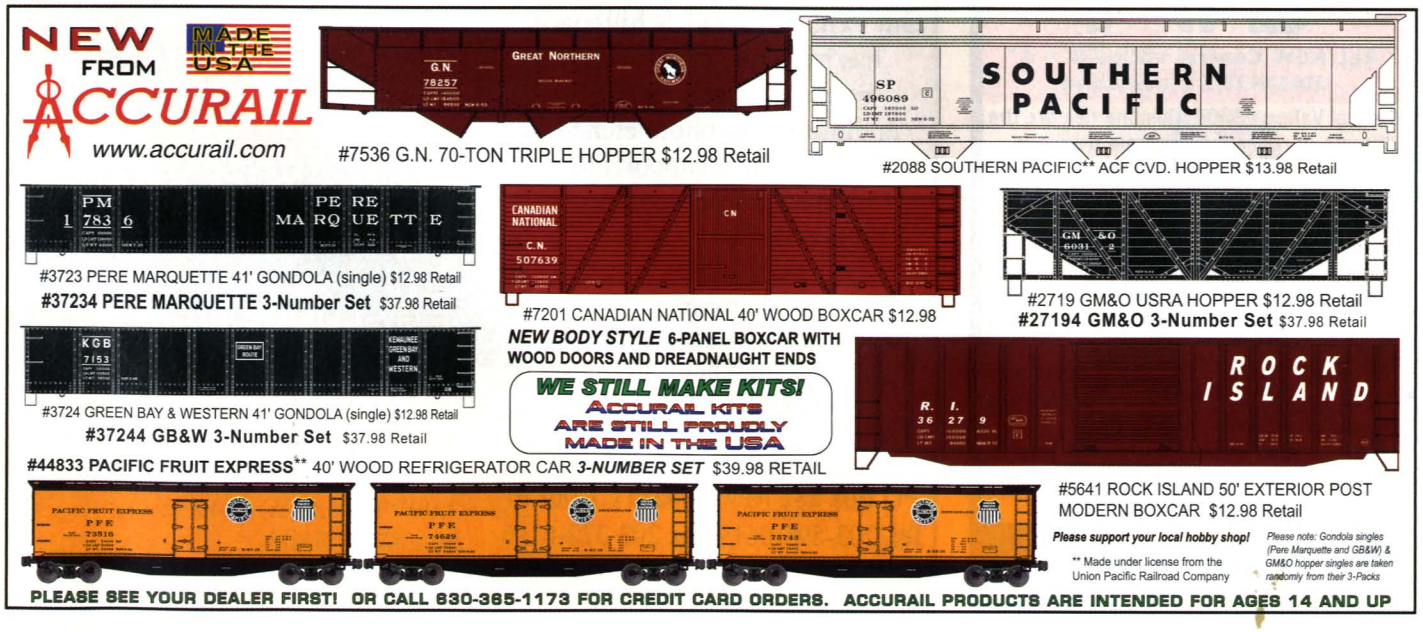
The Atlas Master Line 1932 Standard ARA Boxcar

Atlas markets both the Trainman series and the Master Line series. The difference between the series is in the detailing and price. The Master Line series is highly detailed, where the Trainman series is not as detailed. Both are very good models in appearance and performance. This model of the 1932 ARA boxcar has been on the want list for many modelers. (I believe that the O scalers are still demanding different variations of these highly sought-after models.)

There have been many models of different scales offered by many companies; however, until the Atlas reproduction in N scale, accurate reproductions of this model for us N scalers had been slim. Atlas did not disappoint us with this model. Sharp detailing, with lettering and accurate painting to match, this model is a keeper for any layout representing the 1930 to 1960 eras.

The boxcar measurements match the prototype drawings found in many books and on the Internet. There are so many variations of this prototype that my hat's off to the Research and Development team of Atlas for reproducing this boxcar of Central of Georgia Railroad.

The pin-mounted trucks with plastic wheelsets are free rolling and track around code 55 and code 80 track with ease. The brake detail looks great with molded-on brake lines with cylinders and levers closely matching the prototype. The black roof and running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The underneath of this car has detailing of the air and brake system. The brake levers, piping, and rods are molded into the bottom of the floor along with the cylinders and air supply tank.

board detail, with the 10 panel roof, looks great although the running board usually had staggered boards on most boxcars of this era. The lettering is readable (under a magnifying glass) and accurate. You will notice that the build date is new, 9 – 37, which is accurate because this is when Central of Georgia purchased these cars.

The Road Test Evaluation

Before any new rolling stock or other equipment is used on your layout, it should meet a couple of NMRA recommended practices that improve reliability and performance. I perform these tests regularly whenever there is a problem either with the track or the equipment.

Per NMRA Recommended Practice "RP-20.1 Car Weight," N-scale rolling stock should be weighted at [1/2 oz + 0.15 oz per inch of body length], resulting in a calculated weight of .95 oz for the boxcar at a measured length of 3 inches; the actual measured weight is .95 oz. Spot on.

Testing found the wheel sets on the car to be correctly gauged, when measured with the NMRA Mark IV standards gauge. The coupler and trip pin height matched the Micro-Trains coupler height gauge.

This boxcar was able to negotiate around 9.75-inch curves and broad curves, a 3 percent grade, and through a number of Atlas and Peco switches without any problems. The couplers match other AccuMate Couplers and other brands of couplers also without any problems. This is a good running boxcar.

Atlas has very good customer service standards from my standpoint. The person at the other end of the phone was very friendly, helpful, and had a good sense of humor. Their warranty states that Atlas provides a limited manufacturer's warranty for 90 days after purchase on all factory defects.

Thanks, Atlas

Fond childhood memories flood my mind when the name Atlas is mentioned. The name has a meaning of strength and quality. I became interested in trains because my family worked on the railroad for a lifetime. The train set under the Christmas tree was a beginning for toy trains. The purchase of the Atlas layout booklet paved the way for model railroading. The first purchases of engines, rolling stock, and track were made by Atlas.

Yes, I believed that I would become a model railroader. However, Atlas made this lifetime of enjoyment possible sooner. The 1932 ARA boxcar is a welcome addition to my fleet of rolling stock and it will be a great addition to your fleet also. Again, thanks for the enjoyment you have given model railroaders for the last sixty years, Atlas. Here's wishing you success for many more years.

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Atlas "Angels" ride the rails for charity

O — Atlas O has unveiled a special Angel Train Set that will be used to help aid needy families in the New Jersey area. For years, it has been the personal aspiration of Atlas Chief Executive Officer Thomas W. Haedrich to create a project combining elements of his prized collection of 19th and 20th century religious artifacts with his lifetime dedication to community service. With the 2007 acquisition of the Industrial Rail Traditional O-27 line by Atlas O, LLC, he found the means to make his dream reality.

"I've been fascinated by the idea of angels since I was a young boy," Tom said. "I always thought the Archangels would be a good theme for a model train set and I wanted to be the one to make it. I chose the names of the Archangels because each of us has a guardian angel that guides and helps us when needed."

Tom acquired his diverse collection [of 19th and 20th century religious artifacts] through his travels and as gifts. Each summer, when his family vacations at the Jersey Shore, he visits a restoration warehouse where items from demolished structures are sold. It was there he obtained a large stone cross from Eden Hall Church in Philadelphia. His wife, Diane, bought it for Tom's birthday. He had Atlas graphic designers translate it into artwork that will appear on the doors of the front and rear passenger cars. Tom knew he wanted an angel to be the train's engineer. On a visit to historic Lambertville, New Jersey, Tom found an angel in an antique shop with "perfect angel wings."

"I bought it, took a picture of it, sent it to our model builder in China and had them use those for the back of our engineer," Tom related. "I just returned from a trip to China during which I approved the design. I found the sounds for the locomotive and worked with the sound engineers in China as well this trip."

The net profit of all of Atlas' Angel Train sets sold will go to charity. Angel Engineer not shown.

In keeping with the heavenly theme, the coaches are named for Archangels Raphael and Michael. Cloud roadbed not shown.

Fulfilling the ultimate goal of this special project, all net profits from the sale of the Atlas O Angel Train Sets will be donated to the charitable works for the poor and needy of the Shrine of St. Joseph in Stirling, New Jersey near Tom's home; a picturesque mountain retreat he visits frequently for mass, reflection, and inspiration.

"Anyone who knows of St. Joseph's Shrine knows what a joy the place is, sitting in the Watchung Mountains, overlooking one of the most beautiful areas in New Jersey," Tom said. "I get so much pleasure out of my visits there, and admire the work they do, that it seemed natural to make them the recipient of any profits generated from the sale of the Angel Train. We all need an Angel Train now more than ever to bring a little more light into our lives."

The train set will feature a diecast steam locomotive and tender, puffing smoke, transformer-activated sounds, electrical pickup on both locomotive and tender, illuminated headlight, interior illumination in combine and coach, diecast trucks and couplers, interior seating, Industrial Rail Track System, and transformer.

The set is based on the primary Archangels: Gabriel (locomotive), Michael and Raphael (cars); features sounds such as church bells and Gabriel's horn; an Angel Engineer (with white wings); Angel silhouette acrylic sheets on combine and coach windows; "White Cloud" Roadbed Track; and Metallic gold and blue paint scheme.

The Angel Train set (#1009203) will be available this fall for $299.95. Details about this new train set from Atlas O, LLC, are available at www.atlaso.com/angeltrain.htm. A special logo has been created by Atlas graphic designers.

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Rio Grande SD40T-2 locomotive released from Intermountain

N — Intermountain has released an SD40T-2 locomotive, five cylindrical covered hoppers, three 4750 cubic foot hoppers, and twelve Pullman Standard 4-4-3 sleepers.

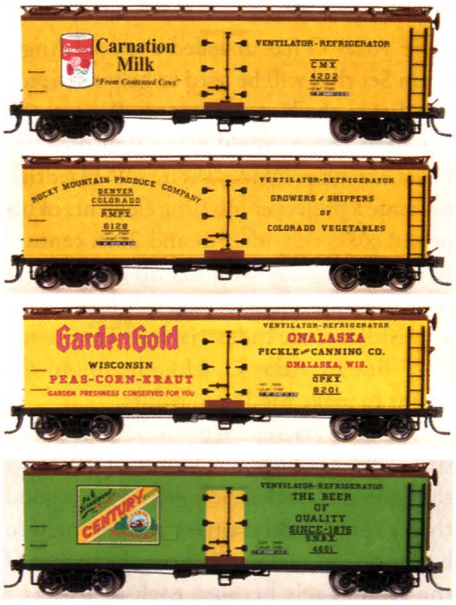
An SD40T-2 locomotive has been released with new roadnumbers for D&RGW (#69401). It is decorated in the sharp black and aspen gold scheme with the billboard flying "Rio Grande" on the sides. The model features a three-chime air horn and Sinclair antenna on the cab roof. It also comes with a smaller fuel tank than those found on Southern Pacific units. It is fully assembled with numerous etched metal details, such as sunshades, windshield wipers, fan and intake grilles, and comes with Micro-Trains couplers. It is available for roadnumbers 5344, 5349, 5355, and 5366. The locomotive retails for $119.95.

Five cylindrical covered hoppers are available with new roadnumbers. The first is for Potacan (#65207). It is painted orange-rose, and has the large white Potacan logo on the sides. Available roadnumbers are 815, 827, 836, 854, 879, and 890. Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo (#65211) is painted black with white lettering. It is available for roadnumbers 1503, 1510, 1519, 1529, 1532, and 1542. Canadian National (#65221) is painted aluminum and is used in the cement service; it is available for numbers 382058, 382123, 382216, 382674, 382382, and 382499. Canadian National (#65222) is painted gray with black lettering. The large CN "Wet Noodle" herald is painted on the right end of the car sides. Available roadnumbers are 377139, 377262, 377314, 377487, 377506, and 377715. Canadian National's (#65225) decoration has been identified by Intermountain as "Rainbow" because the multiple colors cover the visible light spectrum. This decoration appears on one side of the car while the other side of the car is gray with red lettering. It is available for numbers 370700, 370703, 370704, 370705, 370706, and 370709. Each cylindrical covered hopper comes fully assembled with etched metal roofwalks and Micro-Trains trucks and couplers. They retail $21.95 each.

Three 4750 cubic foot hoppers have been released. MKT (#65352) is painted green with the large "MKT" in yellow. It available for roadnumbers 4210, 4236, 4247, 4255, 4273, and 4284. Grain Train (#65392) is decorated in light gray with red lettering. The logo is red. Available for roadnumbers are 3003, 3005, 3008, 3012, 3017, and 3024. McMaster Grain Co. (#65394) is bright yellow and lettered in black with SSGX reporting marks. Available roadnumbers are 101, 102, 105, 106, 108, and 109. Each car comes fully assembled with etched metal roofwalks and Micro-Trains trucks and couplers. They retail for $21.95 each.

Five Trinity 5161 cubic foot hoppers are available. BNSF (#67201) is painted mineral red with white lettering, and bears the "Circle-Cross" herald used on the first cars purchased by BNSF. The available roadnumbers are 473535, 474471, 474507, 475606, 475788, and 476174. Canadian Pacific (#67208) is decorated for the SOO line with the CP herald. Available numbers are 121731, 121745, 121750, 121763, 121768, and 121791. ADM Milling Co. (#67214) is painted gray with black lettering, and a blue herald and is available for roadnumbers 5203, 5216, 5227, 5231, 5248, and 5250. Consolidated Grain & Barge (#67216) is painted gray with black lettering, and is available for roadnumbers 546107, 546112, 546118, 546120, 546133, and 546135. Potosh Corp. (#67217) is painted a salmon color with black lettering. The logo is white. It is available for roadnumbers 14072, 14121, 14194, 14226, 14280, and 14319. Each car comes fully assembled with etched metal roofwalks and Micro-Trains trucks and couplers. The hoppers retail for $21.95 each.

Four wood refrigerator cars are now available. Carnation Milk (#67722) is painted



yellow with a large red, white, and green Carnation can painted on the left. The ends and roof are painted freight car brown. The ends and roof are painted freight car brown. The roadnumbers are 4201, 4202, 4203, 4204, 4205, and 4206. Rocky Mountain Produce Company (#67725) has yellow sides, freight car brown ends and roof, and black lettering. The numbers are 6104, 6107, 6112, 6119, 6123, and 6128. Onalaska Pickle & Canning Co. (#67725) has yellow sides with black-outlined, rose-colored lettering. The ends and roof are freight car brown. Available roadnumbers are 8200, 8201, and 8202. P.H. Schneider Brewing Co. (#67726) was located in Trinidad, CO. Their refrigerator car has apple green sides with freight car brown roof and ends. The side door is yellow. Available for numbers 4600, 4601, 4602, and 4603, the models come fully assembled with finely molded details and Micro-Trains trucks and couplers. The refrigerator cars retail $19.95 each.

Twelve Pullman Standard 4-4-2 sleepers have been released in four roadnames or numbers. Pennsylvania (#CCS6800) has been completely re-tooled. The new car is manufactured with interior details and lighting. This Pennsylvania version is painted tuscan with the Dulux gold striping. It is available in Imperial roadnames. Union Pacific (#CCS6801) is decorated in the classic Armor Yellow and Harbor Mist Gray. The striping and lettering is red. It has the Imperial roadnames. Pennsylvania (#CCS6803) is decorated in the two-tone tuscan colors of the Fleet of Modernism scheme. The gold striping and lettering is laser sharp. It is available in Imperial road-

names. New York Central (#CCS6804) is decorated with the NYC two-tone gray scheme, with the narrow striping in the window band, and black roof. The striping is silver. It is available in Imperial roadnames. Illinois Central (#CCS6805) is painted dark brown and orange, with yellow striping and lettering. Southern Pacific (#CCS6806) is painted silver with red letter-board for the SP Sunset scheme. The lettering is gray. Rock Island (#CCS6807) has the red and silver painted scheme for the joint Golden State service. The lettering is black. Atlantic Cost Line (CCS#6808) is painted silver with black lettering. The roof and underframe are black. Canadian National (#CCS6809) is decorated with the light gray stripes on the black car body. The CN logo is printed to the lower right in red. Chicago & North Western (#CCS6810) is painted in the dark green and yellow livery of C&NW. It is available in the Imperial roadnames. Union Pacific (#CCS6811) is decorated in the classic Pullman two-tone gray scheme for service on the Overland Route of the UP. The roof is black, the striping is lettering gray. It is available in Imperial roadnames. The final car is New York Central (#CCS6812). It is painted in the post war NYC scheme. The window band is light gray and the dark gray is above and below. The roof is black. The striping and lettering are white. The cars come equipped with interior details and lights, and Micro-Trains trucks and couplers. The sleepers retail for $39.95 each.

Intermountain Railway Co., P.O. Box 839, Longmont, CO 80502-0839; 303-772-1901; Fax: 303-772-8534; E-mail: intermountain@intermountain-railway.com; www.intermountain-railway.com

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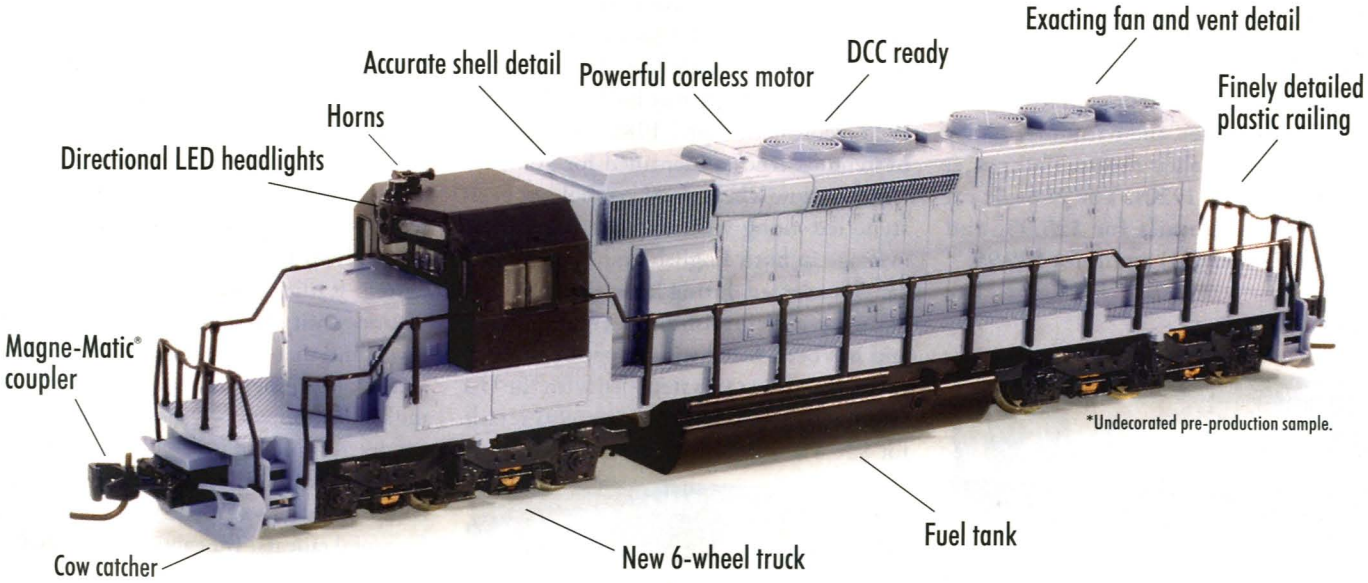

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Z SCALE 1:220

New Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey billboard car from Micro-Trains

Z, N, Nn3 & HOn3— Micro-Trains Line Co. has released a new billboard car for N- and Z-scale. Also available is a 40-foot boxcar, two 39-foot single dome tank cars, a 40-foot standard boxcar, and a Pennsylvania Railroad and Southern Pacific coach car in Z-scale. Available in N-scale is a 50-troop kitchen car, a bay window caboose, a 40-foot Hy-Cube boxcar, two 50-foot steel side 14-panel gondolas, a 40-foot standard boxcar, a 50-foot standard boxcar, and an 89-foot 4-inch TOFC flat car. A 30-foot boxcar has been released for Nn3, and a 30-foot composite frame wood reefer is available for HOn3.

N & Z Scale

A new billboard car has been released for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey. These wood-sheathed boxcars are painted brown and feature a colorful representation of an actual Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey poster promoting their shows. This poster dates back to the 1920s. The N-Scale car (#047 00 401) retails for $25.95, and Z-Scale (#515 00 601) retails for $29.95.

Z-scale

A 40-foot standard boxcar with plug door decorated for Oregon is the fourteenth car of a 50-car series representing each of the 50 states in the union. OR 1859 bears the Western Meadowlark and Oregon Grape, Oregon's official state bird and flower. The flag of the state of Oregon is in the background. The roadnumber 1859 represents the year the 'Beaver State' was admitted into the union. The boxcar (#502 00 514) retails for $22.95.

Two 39-foot single dome tank cars are available for Kopper's Company. KPCX 2105 and 2129 are painted black with red, and have a black and white logo and white and orange lettering. They were built in November 1943, serviced in January 1952, and run on Bettendorf trucks. Kopper's tank cars were used to haul coal tar, the base material for the five main chemical products: Coal pitch essential for steel and aluminum production; carbon black for rubber vulcanization; creosote for wood treatment; and naphthalene and phthalic anhydride for plastics and polyester. The tank cars (#530 00 271 & #530 00 272) retail for $22.60 each.

A 40-foot standard boxcar with sliding door has been released for Canadian National. CN 428651 is painted brown with the white "wet noodle" herald and yellow wheat sheaf logo. It was built in October 1945, rebuilt in April 1985 and runs on Bettendorf trucks. Identified for grain service, a yellow wheat sheaf symbol has been stenciled along with the "Repaired by..." message in both English and French. This car was selected during January of 1980 for grain service refurbishing and renumbering, and has been fitted with paper or wooden grain door. The car is stenciled with the U-1 symbol. The boxcar (#500 00 590) retails for $26.85.

New coach cars have been released for Pennsylvania Railroad, roadnumber 4214, and Southern Pacific, roadnumber SP 2212. Micro-Trains did not provide any prototypical information on these cars. The cars (#552 00 060 & #552 00 070) retail for $26.60 each.

N Scale

A 50-troop kitchen car is available for the United States Army. It is painted olive drab with a silver roof, and is available for roadnumber USAX G-10. The logo and lettering are white. It was built by American Car & Foundry as part of a series delivered between 1943 and 1946, serviced in 1954, and runs on Allied Full Cushion trucks. The car is one of three hospital kitchen cars converted to guard cars at Fort Holabird in Baltimore, MD. The car transported and housed security detachments guarding shipments of hazardous material, and served on ammunition trains between the Naval Ammunition Depot at Hawthorne, NV and the Naval Weapons Station at Port Chicago. The car (#118 00 040) retails for $20.35.

A bay window caboose has been released for CSX Transportation. CSXT 900400 is painted CSX blue and gray with an aluminum roof, yellow ends, and a black band along the bottom on the sides. The herald and lettering are blue. The caboose's rebuild date is 1986 and it runs on Swing-Motion trucks. CSX Transportation was formed on July 1, 1986 as a renaming of the Seaboard System Railroad and Chessie System, Inc. into one entity. In the public announcement, it was said that "CSX is singularly appropriate. C for Chessie, S for Seaboard, and X, the multiplication symbol, means that together we are so much more." The T had to be added to use CSXT as a reporting mark since company initials that end in X typically are for rental railcars. The caboose (#130 00 040) retails for $29.65.

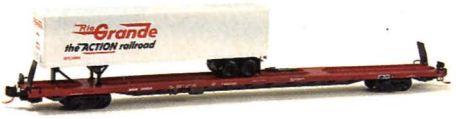
A 40-foot Hy-Cube boxcar with sliding door is available for Burlington Northen. BN 281441 is painted green with white

Burlington Northern logo and lettering. It was built in November 1967, serviced in June 1975 and runs on Barber Roller Bearing trucks. Mini Hy-Cubes were specifically designed for use in large appliance service and were assigned to specific appliance corporations: Whirlpool, Admiral, Philco, etc. This lot of 50 cars is fitted with twin Equipco load dividers. The mini hi-cube phase was short lived, and was quickly overshadowed by longer and bigger cars. The boxcar (#101 00 090) retails for $22.55.

Two 50-foot steel side 14-panel gondolas are available for Kopper's Company with fixed ends and straight sides. KGCX 121 and 138 are painted white with black ends. The Kopper's Coke herald is red with black, and the logo is red; side lettering is black and end lettering is white. They were built in September 1929, serviced in March 1956, and run on Bettendorf trucks. Koppers Chemicals is a global chemical and materials company based in Pennsylvania. It specializes in manufacturing carbon chemicals from coal tar. The gondolas (#105 00 711 & #105 00 712) retail for $23.95 each.

A 40-foot standard boxcar with plug door and no roofwalk is the twelfth car of a 44-car series representing each of the presidents of the United States. It bears the portrait of our 33rd president, Harry S. Truman and 1945-1953 as the roadnumber. During his administration the United States became a charter member of the United Nations (UN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The boxcar (#074 00 112) retails for $23.95.

A 50-foot standard boxcar with plug door and no roofwalk is available for Canadian Pacific. CP 80986 is painted green with black and white logo and lettering. It was built in April 1967 and runs on Barber Roller Bearing trucks. This car bears the pre-Multi-Mark era Evergreen Tree paint scheme signifying newsprint as the principal commodity. CP 80986 is from a 250-car fleet, with 215 cars remaining in service according to the 1981 ORER. The boxcar (#038 00 220) retails for $20.90.



An 89-foot 4-inch TOFC flat car carrying a trailer load is painted red with a white logo and lettering for Denver & Rio Grande Western. D&RGW 105023 was built in September 1978 by American Car & Foundry, serviced in 1982, and runs on Barber Roller Bearing trucks. This car was originally built for the Providence and Worchester. The Maine Central acquired the 46-car fleet for a while until 1982 when the Denver and Rio Grande Western secured the flats. The TOFCs, equipped with hitches and bridge plates, were in service through the late 80s with a carrying capacity of 150,000 pounds. The flat car (#071 00 530) retails for $39.65.

Nn3 Scale

A 30-foot boxcar with sliding doors has been released for Southern Pacific. SP 132 is painted boxcar red with white logo and lettering. It was built during the period 1888-1906, serviced in 1957 and runs on Barber

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Latest arrivals are NP "Holiday Lounge" sides in HO (#65, $31.75) and N (#565, $21.75). We have also retooled the #60 Milwaukee Road "Grove" cafe-parlor and #52 RPO-Express HO sides to fit the Walthers *Hiawatha* car bodies. Sadly, we have had to discontinue some older items due to insufficient sales and market forces. See our website for updated list. We still offer over 100 items for GN, NP, SP&S, CB&Q, BN, MILW, UP, PRR, NYC, SP, C&NW, IC, RI, B&O, C&EI, L&N, KCS, N&W, ERIE, ATSF, MP, CN, CP, VIA & Amtrak. Use with TSP, Rivarossi, Con-Cor, ECW, Bachmann, Kato, Walthers, our HO Body Kits, or in N ALM core kits or plastic dome car overlays. Send 2-oz. SSAE for catalog & bulletin. Through hobby shops or direct ($4.50 for shipping). www.brasscarsides.com
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Coleman Arch Bar trucks. SP 132 was originally built for the Oregonian Railroad in the 1880s. The Oregonian Railroad was acquired by the Southern Pacific and the car eventually received this paint post-1930. Today, the car runs with the 'Slim Princess' at the Laws Railroad Museum & Historical Site located near Bishop, CA. The boxcar (#800 00 190) retails for $18.40.

HOn3 Scale

A 30-foot composite frame wood reefer has been released for Colorado & Southern. C&S 1101 is painted boxcar red with yellow sides. It bears a circular black and white logo, and black lettering. It was built in February 1909, serviced in March 1935, and runs on Bettendorf trucks. Originally built for the Colorado and Southern as series 500 – 519 in 1909, these cars were repainted and renumbered in 1912, and received this circular trademark paint scheme beginning in 1927. Three cars in this series, 1113, 1116, and 1108 were sold to Rio Grande Southern in 1938. By 1940, another version of the Leadville arrangement of the circular trademark theme was introduced and cars began to be repainted, though few of this series remained in service by that time. Hand grabs, stirrups, and ladders are user installed. The reefer (#850 00 010) retails for $39.45.

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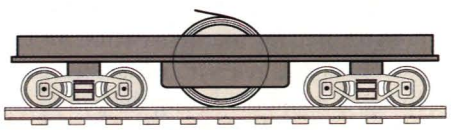

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REVIEW HO

Athearn re-introduces the EMD SW1000 as RTR model

Review by Mike Acker
Photos by Mary Acker

SW1000 Diesel Locomotive, MSRP: $89.98
Multiple Units Reviewed: BN 580 (ATH95804)
BNSF 3606 (ATH95801)
Burlington 9313 (ATH95808)

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www.tcsdcc.com

THE latest release from Athearn didn't just offer us one new locomotive model; they gave us two: the HO-scale EMD (Electro-Motive Division) SW1000 and SW1500 switcher locomotives. These new models represent two more locomotives that were previously produced in the Blue Box line now available in the RTR (Ready To Roll) line. In this issue we will take a look at the SW1000 while the SW15000 will be covered in a later edition.

The new SW1000 is a ready to run, DCC-ready locomotive with all-new tooling. The initial RTR release featured the SW1000 decorated in Burlington Northern, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Heritage I colors, Chicago Burlington and Quincy, and Denver & Rio Grande Western — all in three different roadnumbers. Also offered is a single model decorated in the BNSF 2005 "Swoosh" logo and an undecorated unit.

[*Ed. Note: All models mentioned in this article were available on the Athearn web site as of press time.*]

Athearn's first release of the SW1000 covers many variations of the prototype as many would differ from the mounting of the handrails, truck wheel bearings, and exhaust spark arrestors to the pilot details.

Prototype History

Both the SW1000 and SW1500 switcher locomotives were introduced in 1965 as part of a line of eight new EMD locomotive models built around the new 645 series prime mover. The 645 was designed to replace the previous standard, the 567 series prime mover, which had been the EMD standard for over 25 years, but its capabilities were already maximized at 2,500 horsepower. The SW1000 featured an eight-cylinder 645E prime mover with a rating of 1,000 hp, while the 12-cylinder SW1500 was rated at 1500. The physical appearance of both the SW1000 and SW1500 are very similar as they share the same frame and body style. The main spotting feature between them is that the SW1000 has one exhaust stack while the SW1500 has two. In the EMD catalog, the SW1000 was designed to replace the 567-powered SW900, as it offered an increase of 100 hp, new D77 traction motors, as well as other equipment improvements.

There were a total of 119 SW1000 switchers built for 25 different customers with CB&Q/BN and D&RGW the largest owners with 55 and 10 units respectively. These two railroads were also the only Class I Railroads to own this model; all the other owners were either industrial railroads or short lines. The lower horsepower rating of the SW1000 made them ideal for this lighter use, whereas the higher horsepower SW1500 was better suited for the larger switching operations of the larger Class 1 railroads. Production of the SW1000 did not last long; it was soon realized

that the cab height posed clearance issues with many prospective industrial buyers. In response, EMD redesigned the SW1000 with a lower profile cab and in 1968 came out with a new locomotive, the SW1001. This new switcher would lead to the elimination of the SW1000 model from the EMD catalog by 1972. Through the years the SW1000 switchers proved to be stout little performers and many are still in operation today, well past their 40th birthday.

The Model

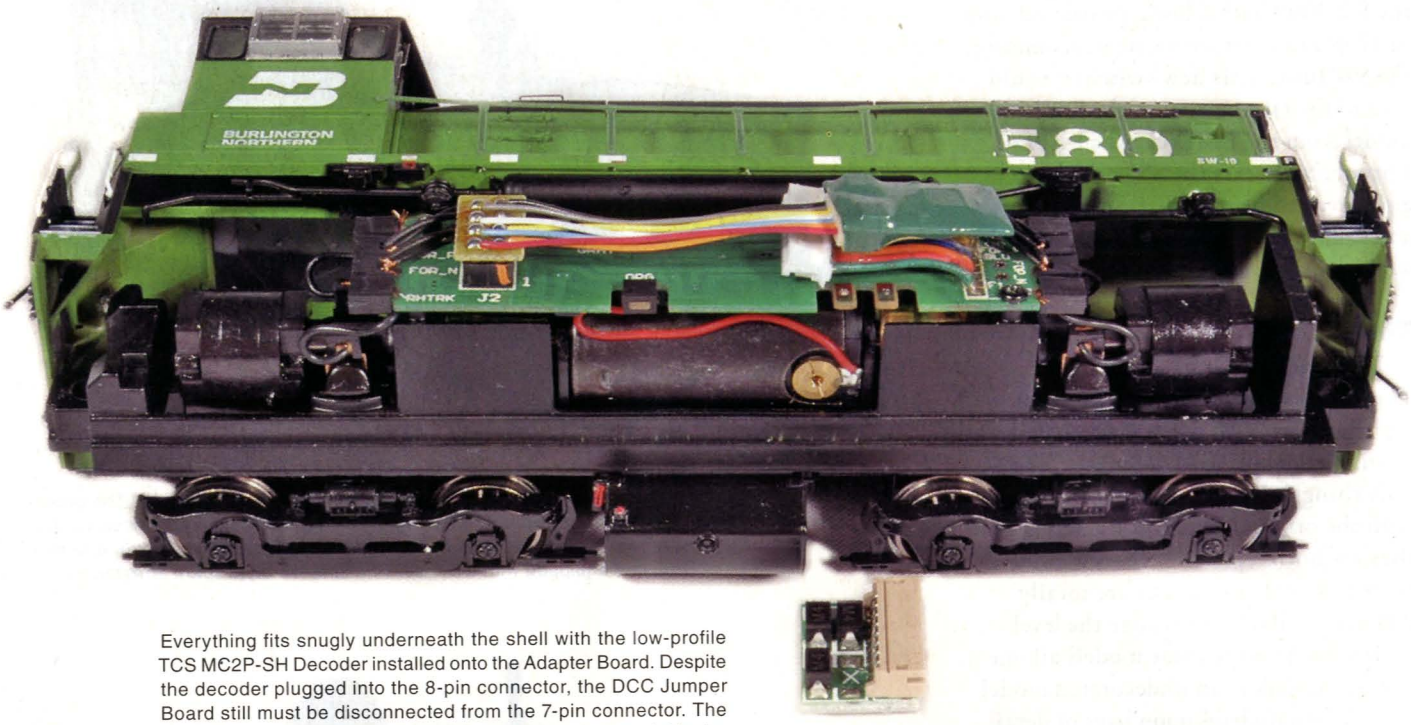
These are extraordinary models. They have been totally retooled from the wheels up with a new chassis, drive train, shell, and a load of details. The only thing these models have in common with the original Blue Box models is that they are both replicas of the SW1000 prototype; otherwise they are totally different animals. To realize the level of detail applied to these models all one need do is look at an undecorated model as they contain bags upon bags of detail parts. The hood details include wire grab irons, detailed hood mounted bell, sand filler hatches, and a well-done photo-etched radiator screen. The cab features a fully detailed interior with flush-fitting windows and finely detailed windshield wipers. The pilot side of the cab has three photo-etched steps, sand filler hatches, and a multitude of handrails, while the end pilots feature MU hoses, airline and coupler cut levers. The underframe is well detailed with air piping provided between the air reservoirs and filters. The fuel tank is well represented with frame tank mountings, overfill pipes, and fuel fillers.

Creating an accurate model such as the SW1000 is no simple task considering the prototype came in many different variations. The sample models provided reflect this wide range of variations applied to the prototypes. The main differences range from the placement of the side handrails, (either mounted to the hood or walkway), the inclusion of exhaust spark arrestors, a pilot mounted hose tray, and the type of truck wheel bearings (roller or friction).

A good comparison would be to examine the prototype history of the sample CB&Q (#9313 & #9314) units with the BN (#580) model. The prototypes of these models were all part of the initial CB&Q order of 12 locomotives num-

The Athearn SW1000 is a totally new model from the wheels up. The photo-etched radiator screens and the front fan shroud stand out very nicely on this new model. The model shown represents a post-merger repaint of a former CB&Q unit equipped with a BN-specific beehive-style spark arrestor.

The new SW1000 switchers include a fully decorated cab with flush-fitting windows and scale-size windshield wipers. A close look inside will reveal a placard that reads "DANGER 600 VOLTS." In front of the cab are photo-etched steps, an array of grab irons, and a fully equipped pilot with MU hoses, drop step, and a coupler release mechanism.



Everything fits snugly underneath the shell with the low-profile TCS MC2P-SH Decoder installed onto the Adapter Board. Despite the decoder plugged into the 8-pin connector, the DCC Jumper Board still must be disconnected from the 7-pin connector. The most significant improvement over the old blue box model is the well-balanced drive system anchored by a Mashima motor.

By-The-Numbers

SW1000 (BN 580)
Athearn
HO 1:87 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
1.8		8.6		20.9%

Volts	Amps
12	0.19

Analog DC

Start Volts = 2.2

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
2.2	0.05	8.9
6.0	0.09	47.1
9.0	0.11	77.9
12.0	0.12	108.5

DCC

Stall Amps = 0.79

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	0.40
Mid	63	51.8
Top	126	102.0

By-The-Numbers

SW1000 (BNSF 3606)
Athearn
HO 1:87 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
1.8		8.6		20.9%

Volts	Amps
12	0.20

Analog DC

Start Volts = 2.1

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
2.2	0.04	7.9
6.0	0.09	41.5
9.0	0.10	71.3
12.0	0.12	101.2

DCC

Stall Amps = 0.81

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	0.41
Mid	63	47.6
Top	126	96.9

By-The-Numbers

SW1000 (CB&Q 9313)
Athearn
HO 1:87 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
1.5		8.6		17.4%

Volts	Amps
12	0.19

Analog DC

Start Volts = 2.3

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
2.3	0.05	6.1
6.0	0.10	42.2
9.0	0.11	72.9
12.0	0.13	104.3

DCC

Stall Amps = 0.80

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	0.37
Mid	63	50.1
Top	126	98.3

bered 9310 – 9321, where the CB&Q unit numbered 9316 later became BN unit 580. The two CB&Q models are modeled correctly with hood mounted handrails and a standard exhaust stack; whereas the BN model reflects the changes applied to the prototype after the merger, with the handrails walkway mounted and a "bee-hive" style spark arrestor added to the exhaust stack. The D&RGW unit also reflects detailing specific to the D&RGW prototypes with the as-delivered friction bearing trucks, Sinclair antenna, hose trays, footboards, and the D&RGW unique spark arrestor.

The paintwork on each model meets the high standard we now expect from Athearn RTR products. The Cascade Green and black paint of the BN unit is applied correctly with the color transition even with the radiator grills. The white diagonal stripes on both ends are sharp and well defined. The same can be said for the orange stripes on the D&RGW unit. The D&RGW unit correctly includes the round red reflectors applied to the walkway sill. The lettering and placards on each unit is crisp and readable when magnified. A close look inside the cab will reveal a "DANGER 600 VOLTS" placard on the control cabinet.

Even though the D&RGW units came with hose trays, they were never MU capable and were never equipped with MU hoses as is incorrectly included on the model. The other noticeable detailing discrepancy on the D&RGW model is the location of the hood grab irons behind the cab on the engineer's side — they should be positioned closer to the cab. Probably the biggest detail inaccuracy on these models is the type of all-weather window used on the CB&Q and BN models. This window should be large enough to cover three windows, but the one provided only covers the middle two. Regardless of these small discrepancies it appears Athearn has made an admirable attempt to get the details as close to the prototype as possible. To make all these locomotives fully accurate would require additional tooling that would raise the price for these models significantly.

Performance

Out of the box and straight to the track these little locomotives performed beyond this reviewer's expectations as they ran much smoother and quieter than any other Athearn RTR locomotives sampled prior. This performance can be credited to the presence of a Mashima motor matched with a well-balanced drive train. Their performance in low speed achieved very respectable results; it only took a little over two volts to get them rolling. The high end of the speed spectrum found these models operating a bit fast with test results more than 40 SMPH over the maximum speed of the prototype. In the DC Analog mode directional lighting is provided to the light bulbs through the circuit boards located above the motor.

Operation in DCC also provided excellent test results. The TCS (Train Control Systems) MC2P-SH decoder was chosen for the SW1000 models because of its small footprint and from past favorable experiences with Athearn RTR mechanisms and TCS decoders. During the performance tests, these decoders were able to drive each locomotive at an amazing minimum sustained speed of 0.4 SPMH at step 1 (of 128). This extraordinary performance is attributed to the Back EMF (Electro-Magnetic Force) circuitry on the TCS decoder. This circuit samples the EMF feedback from the motor to control the motor voltage in an attempt to keep the motor spinning at a consistent rate. The top speed during testing in DCC was also way too high, but this can be remedied by adjusting CV5 (Control Variable 5 – top range motor voltage) and CV6 (mid-range motor voltage) accordingly. The documentation provided with the decoder makes it easy to understand these values and other options available on the decoder.

Conclusion

What is there not to like about these little switchers? They look great and are packed with lots of details in different variations with a quality finish. The drive system features a compact and smooth running Mashima motor which makes the SW1000 stand out as one of the best performers in the Athearn RTR line. Despite the fact these locomotives were not widely used among Class I railroads, they still fill a niche for many modelers looking for short line and industrial switcher help. The new SW1000 model is another excellent addition to the growing line of Athearn HO-scale RTR locomotives.

By-The-Numbers

SW1000 (CB&Q 9314)
Athearn
HO 1:87 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
1.8		8.6		20.9%
Volts		Amps		
12		0.22		

Analog DC

Start Volts = 2.4

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
2.2	0.05	7.9
6.0	0.10	41.4
9.0	0.11	72.4
12.0	0.12	102.1

DCC

Stall Amps = 0.80

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	0.38
Mid	63	48.2
Top	126	98.3

By-The-Numbers

SW1000 (D&RGW 141)
Athearn
HO 1:87 • Type: Diesel
Traction Tires? No

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
1.4		8.6		16.2%
Volts		Amps		
12		0.18		

Analog DC

Start Volts = 2.1

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
2.3	0.04	6.8
6.0	0.08	41.8
9.0	0.09	73.4
12.0	0.10	104.6

DCC

Stall Amps = 0.79

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	1	0.39
Mid	63	50.4
Top	126	98.9

AMS releases new paint schemes for Jackson & Sharp coaches

1:20.3 — American Model Supply has released Jackson & Sharp coaches in new paint schemes. The large-scale model consists of a plastic body and brass castings, has a minimum radius of 1.2 meters or 48 inches, is 127 millimeters wide (5 inches), 699 millimeters long (27-1/2 inches), and weighs 2.73 kilograms (6 pounds). The model features die-cast sprung trucks, metal wheels, full interior details, full underbody details, operating doors, working knuckle couplers, and interior lighting.

American Model Supply offers a line of Jackson & Sharp coaches in 1:20.3 scale. New paint schemes have just been released. The cars are also available in On30/On3.

The coaches are available in 4-car sets for the following schemes: unlettered (#AM54-010B) bumble bee yellow with a single stripe; unlettered green (#AM54-101G); unlettered red (#AM54-010R); D&RGW (#AM54-011) painted green for roadnumbers 256, 280, 304, and 306; RGS (#AM54-012) painted red for 252, 256, 257, and 259; C&S (#AM54-013) painted green with roadnumbers 70, 73, 75, and 76; D&RG (#AM54-014) in red for 274, 284, 306, and 309; and D&RGW (#AM54-015) painted bumble bee yellow with a double stripe for roadnumbers 280, 306, 320, and 331.

Each 4-car set retails for $1,116.00. Individual cars are also available for $279.00. According to the company, the cars are also available in On30/On3 for $119.00 per car. See company web site for details.

American Model Supply, 33268 Central Avenue, Union City, CA 94587; 510-324-3302; Fax: 510-324-3366; E-mail: info@amstrains.com; www.amstrains.com

New Sheffield No. 1 Section Handcar from Alameda Car Works

1:12 & 1:8 — Alameda Car Works has announced the release of craftsman kits to build models of a Sheffield No. 1 Section Handcar. The kits include laser-cut aluminum for the frame and platform, machined steel tires for the wheels, stainless steel gears, photo-etched brass for the journal boxes and walking beam, brass stock to build up the axles, pump handles, and all the hardware needed to assemble the kit. Complete illustrated instructions are also included.

Kits are available in 1:12 (1-inch to the foot) and 1:8 (1.5-inches to the foot) scales. The 1:12 handcar is 6.6-inches long and 5.2-inches wide, the 1:8 handcar is 10-inches long and 7.8-inches wide. Kit assembly requires drilling, gluing, and painting. No machining is required. The kits are all-metal and made in the U.S.A. Introductory pricing is $295.00 for the 1:12 scale kit and $345.00 for the 1:8 kit, plus shipping.

The Sheffield No. 1 section handcar was in production around the turn-of-the-century and was a typical four-wheel, pump handcar. They were used by section gangs for transportation along the railroad.

Alameda Car Works, 1565 Harriet Lane, Anaheim, CA 92802; 888-808-78761; E-mail: joedevlin@alamedacarworks.com; www.alamedacarworks.com

New Virginian battleship gondola and Wabash covered hopper kits from F&C feature Polycarbonate Resin castings

HO — Funaro & Camerlengo has released three new kits. They feature Polycarbonate Resin castings. The kits also include thin film decals and Tichy Train Group grab irons and cast brake parts.

The first is a 105-ton G3c-G4c rebuilt battleship gondola flat kit decorated for Virginian (#2071). It has interior detail and decals, and retails for $33.99. A one-piece body 105 ton G3c-G4c rebuilt battleship gondola is available for Virginian (#2072). It comes with interior detail and decals. It retails for $49.99.

The final kit is a 70 ton quadruple covered hopper for Wabash (#6881). It is available with decals and retails for $36.99.

Kits may be ordered from Funaro directly. Shipping is $9.00 for orders under $85.00. Between $85.00 and $150.00 shipping is $12.00. Over $150.00 shipping is free. An LSSAE may be sent for a free flyer of all new Funaro & Camerlengo Products. Pennsylvania Resident's must add 6% Sales Tax.

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The new "Swoosh" logo (known by a variety of names, including "Heritage III" and "Bold Heritage"), is the new face of the railroad-formerly-known-as the Burlington Northern & Santa Fe. Now simply "BNSF", the paint scheme is indicative of the company's new philosophy towards its progressive and vital role in the public eye.

THE EMD SD70MAC AND BETHGON COALPORTER

The Prototypes

The EMD SD70MAC has been a mainstay of the US Freight industry since its introduction in the early 90's, with more than 1500 of these locomotives being produced. Likewise, the **Bethgon Coalporter** has enjoyed wide success delivering precious "black diamonds" for use in essential electricity and heating services. The BNSF transports loaded coal trains from the Powder River Basin in Wyoming, usually behind several SD70MAC locomotives as the trains can stretch up to more than a hundred cars in length, and sometimes even employing a helper locomotive at the rear to move the precious cargo.

The Models

Both the Kato N EMD SD70MAC locomotive and N Bethgon Coalporter model offer state-of-the-art performance and near-prototypical looks! Enjoy Kato quality with the SD70MAC's twin flywheel drive - DCC friendly and ready to take the drop-in decoder of your choice. The Bethgon Coalporters are exquisitely detailed inside and out, with removable coal loads and inner frame detailing. Each car is individually numbered to create a consist of unique cars (with individual cars available to expand your fleet) that will look as great as they run on your layout!

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176-6309	N EMD SD70MAC BNSF "Swoosh" Cab Headlight #9839	$110
176-6407	N EMD SD70MAC BNSF "Swoosh" Nose Headlight #8987	$110
176-6310	N EMD SD70MAC BNSF Heritage II Cab Headlight #9842	$110
176-6311	N EMD SD70MAC BNSF Heritage II Cab Headlight #9863	$110

Bethgon Coalporters

106-4616	N Bethgon Coalporter 8-Car Set BNSF "Swoosh"	$129
186-0604	N Bethgon Coalporter Individual Car BNSF "Swoosh"	$17

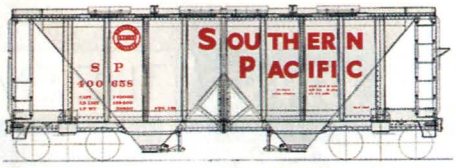
KATO U.S.A., Inc 100 Remington Road Schaumburg, IL 60173 www.katousa.com/N/SD70MAC

New covered hoppers and flat cars from Intermountain

HO — Intermountain has released five cylindrical covered hoppers, an ACF center flow two bay hopper, six ACF 1958 cubic foot 2-bay hoppers, and four 70 ton flat cars.

Five cylindrical covered hoppers have been released. Potacan (#45207) is painted orange-rose, and has the large white Potacan logo on the sides. The other lettering is black. It is available for roadnumbers 815, 827, 836, 879, and 890. Toronto, Hamilton & Buffalo (#45211) is painted black with white lettering and is available for roadnumbers 1503, 1510, 1519, 1529, 1532, and 1542. Canadian Pacific (#45221) is painted aluminum and is used in the cement service. It is available for numbers 382058, 382123, 382216, 382374, 382382, and 382499. Canadian National (#45222) is painted gray with black lettering. The large CN "Wet Noodle" herald is painted on the right end of the car sides. The available numbers are 377139, 377262, 377314, 377487, 377586, and 377715. Canadian National (#45225) has been identified as "Rainbow" because the multiple colors cover the visible light spectrum. The decoration only appears on one side of the car while the other side is gray with red lettering. The car is available in roadnumbers 370700, 370703, 370704, 370705, 370706, and 370709. The cars come fully assembled with etched metal roofwalks, metal wheelsets, and Kadee couplers. They retail for $29.95.

An ACF center flow two-bay hopper is available for BNSF (#46534) decorated in the latest scheme. It is gray with an orange and black BNSF "Swoosh" logo printed on the right end of the car sides. It is available for numbers 405900, 405908, 405916, 405946, 405959, and 405967. It comes fully assembled with etched metal roofwalks, metal wheelsets, and Kadee couplers. They retail for $31.95.



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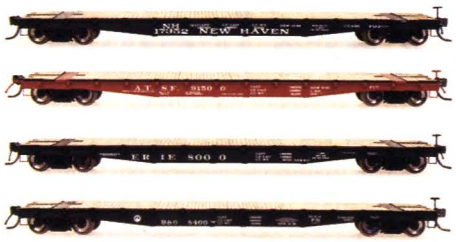
Six ACF 1958 cubic foot 2-bay hoppers have been announced for release. New Haven (#48613) is painted gray and lettered in black with the script logo. It will be available for roadnumbers 117001, 117002, 117007, 117008, 117009, and 117013. Louisville & Nashville (#48614) is painted gray with black lettering, and will be available for numbers 37867, 37882, 37906, 37924, 37949, and 37961. Ann Arbor (#48615) is black with white lettering, and will be available for roadnumbers 2, 5, 11, 12, 36, and 93. Central Silicia Co. (#48616) is painted yellow and decorated with dark green lettering. Available roadnumbers are 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. American Potash & Chemical (#48617) is painted gray and lettered in black. It will be available for numbers 30011, 30014, 30017, 30021, 30023, and 30026. Southern Pacific (#48618) is gray with red lettering and will be available for numbers 400625, 400658, 400669, 400670, 400687, and 400733. The models have etched metal roofwalks and brake platforms. In addition, the grab irons are formed of metal wire. The cars are equipped with metal wheelsets and Kadee-scale size couplers. The hoppers retail for $31.95 each.

Four 70 ton flat cars are now available.



New Haven (#48701) is black with white lettering, and is available for roadnumbers 17305 17317, 17348, 17352, 17379, and 17391. ATSF (#48702) is painted mineral red freight car color with white lettering. It is available for numbers 91500, 91599, 91592, 91624, 91645, and 91683. Erie (#48703) is black with white lettering, and is available for numbers 8000, 8025, 8037, 8058, 8062, and 8089. Baltimore & Ohio (#48704) is painted black with white lettering, and the capital dome herald. It is available for numbers 8400, 8424, 8449, 8463, 8481, 8492. The models include laser-cut wood decks, and wire details. They come equipped with metal wheelsets and Kadee couplers. The flat cars retail for $29.95 each.

Intermountain Railway Co., P.O. Box 839, Longmont, CO 80502-0839; 303-772-1901; Fax: 303-772-8534; E-mail: intermountain@intermountain-railway.com; www.intermountain-railway.com

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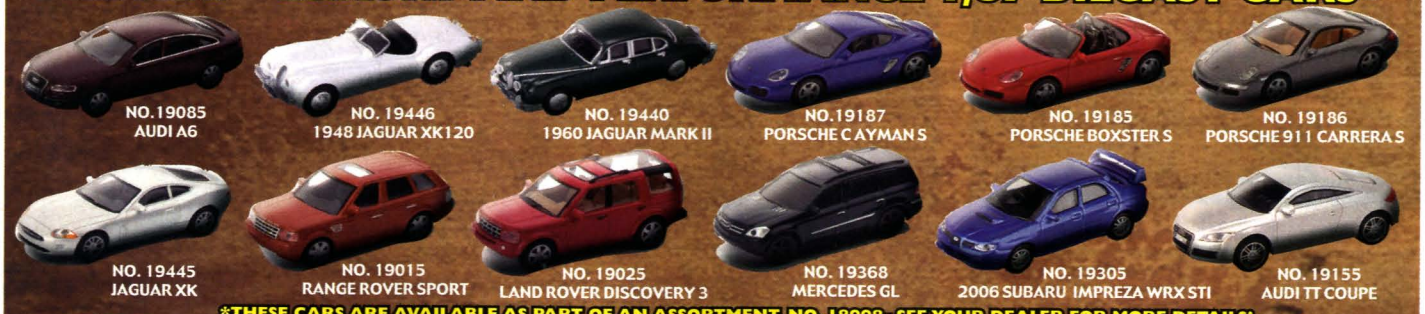
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NO. 19446 1948 JAGUAR XK120
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New passenger cars from Rapido Trains Inc.

N & HO — Rapido Trains Inc. has released four new passenger car styles and several new paint schemes in the HO-scale Super Continental Line and the N-scale Panorama Line. The cars are expected to arrive in Winter 2009-10.

N Scale

The third car in the Panorama Line, the "Dayniter" Leg-Rest Coach, represents a rebuilt car and will be available in the following paint schemes: Central of Georgia; Chesapeake & Ohio; Illinois Central; Louisville & Nashville; Milwaukee Road (UP Colors); Missouri Pacific; Norfolk & Western; Ontario Northland; and undecorated. The retail price will be $47.95. Lightweight coaches usually came in one of two styles: a high-capacity coach for commuter or local runs and a roomier leg-rest coach for long (often overnight) journeys.

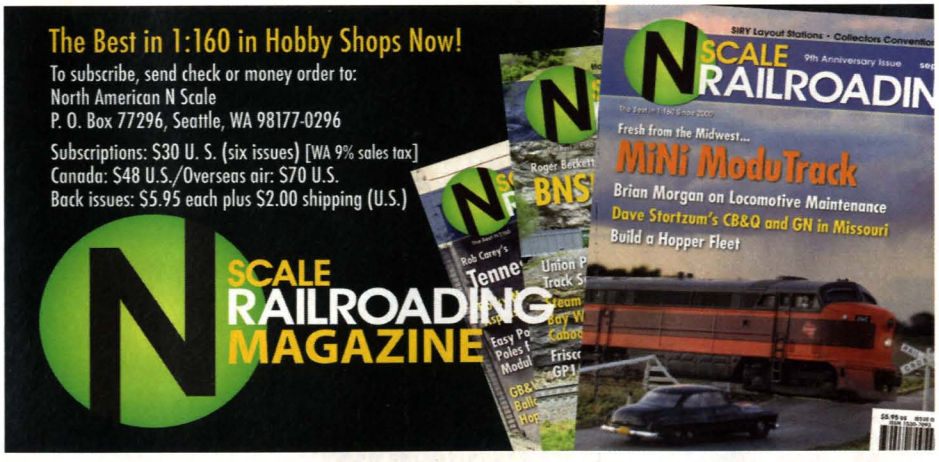
A lightweight coach will be released in new paint schemes for Algoma Central; Canadian Pacific; Delaware & Hudson; Erie; Grand Trunk Western; and Lackawanna. Also to be released in new schemes is a Duplex Sleeper. The paint schemes will be for Chesapeake & Ohio; Erie; Illinois Central; Lackawanna; Louisville & Nashville; Milwaukee Road decorated in UP colors; and Missouri Pacific. The cars will retail for $47.95 each.

All of the Panorama Line passenger cars will feature detailed underbodies; body-mounted Micro-Trains couplers; fixed steps or partial skirts, as appropriate; all air, steam, and electrical lines represented; insulated 36-inch metal wheelsets; "Easy-Peasy" battery-powered interior lighting; flush windows with painted frames and shades; full interior detail including armrests and headrests; diaphragms with etched brass end gates and separate support rods; painted metal roof grab irons applied at the factory; prototype-specific trucks (41-BNO-11 or 41-N-11); multiple car names and/or numbers per paint scheme; and reportedly will operate smoothly on curves down to 9-3/4-inch radius.

HO Scale

The first car to be released is a Buffet Parlor. It will be available in the following paint schemes: Amtrak (Phase 1); Canadian National (1954); Chicago & North Western; Erie; Grand Trunk Western; Great Northern; Gulf, Mobile & Ohio; Milwaukee Road; Missouri Pacific; New York Central; Northern Pacific; and undecorated. The Buffet Parlor will retail for $64.95. Based on the CN Pullman-Standard prototype (plan 7638), the Buffet-Parlor and cars like it entered service over 50 years ago throughout the United States and Canada. These cars were used on services that did not necessarily require a full-length diner.

A Pullman-Standard's Post-War 6-6-4 Sleeper will be released. The sleeper was a vast improvement over its pre-war version. The bedrooms were located in the center of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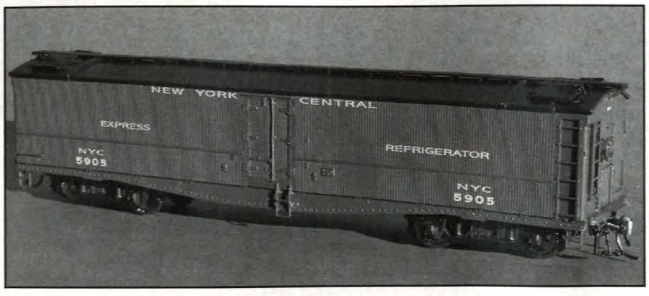

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the car for the most comfortable ride. Electrical systems and trucks were state-of-the-art for the 1950s and were light years beyond the cars delivered in the early 1940s. The model is based on plan 4183A delivered to CN in 1954, which is very similar to plan 4183 delivered to L&N, C&EI, and NCStL in 1953 and plan 4197 delivered to UP and Wabash in 1955. The car will be available in the following schemes: Amtrak (Phase 1); Canadian National (Wet Noodle); Chicago & Eastern Illinois; Chicago & North Western; Erie; Great Northern; Milwaukee Road; Missouri Pacific; Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis; New York Central; Northern Pacific; VIA Rail Canada; and undecorated. The sleeper will retail for $64.95.

A VIA/CN Club Galley will also be released. The available paint schemes are Canadian National (1954); VIA Rail

Canada; and undecorated. The car will retail for $69.95. CN rebuilt several of its parlor cars into Club cars with spacious 2+1 seating and delicious meals served from the on-board galley. A generation ago, the VIA/CN Club Galley was the finest way to travel on day trains in North America.

All three of the Super Continental Line cars will feature: Accurate exterior dimensions measured from the prototype; full interior detail including individually-molded seats; detailed, all-new underbodies; all separate air, steam, and electrical conduits; reinforced floor to prevent warping; operating diaphragms with etched metal end gates; separate marker lamps; partial skirts or fixed steps as appropriate; detailed 41-BNO-11 or 41-N-11 trucks as appropriate; all-metal Macdonald-Cartier knuckle couplers; "Easy-Peasy" battery-powered interior lighting; and several car numbers per paint scheme.

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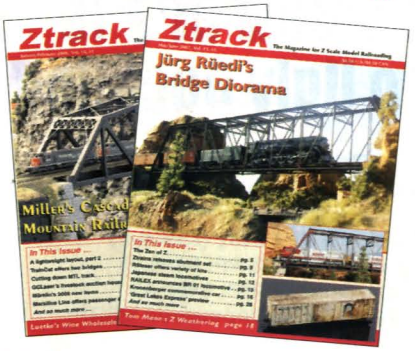

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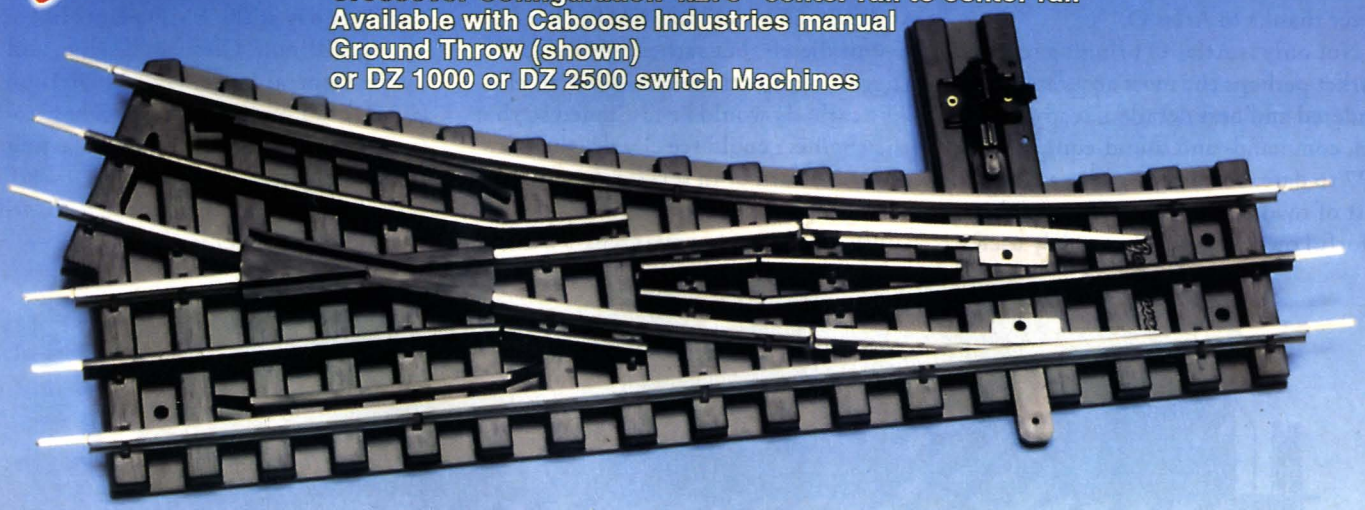

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REVIEW O

An American Icon in O scale: Atlas O's New GP7 is no Ugly Duckling

Review and Photos by David Otte

Santa Fe GP7 2852 (#3906-2)
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NO 1950s-era O-scale layout is really complete without the presence of that iconic American, the Electro Motive Division-built diesel designated the GP7. Fondly known by railfans and crews alike as the Geep, EMD's early hooded General Purpose units joined their covered wagon cousins, the F-units, in displacing the steam locomotive from the railroad scene. Now both 2-rail and 3-rail O gaugers alike can add a 1/48-scale replica of this versatile diesel-electric to their transition era roster thanks to Atlas O.

Not only is Atlas O bringing to market perhaps the most accurately rendered and best detailed, ready-to-run, command- and sound-equipped GP7 to date, but offering it in a whole host of roadnames, too, reflecting the colorful ownership of this widely used Geep. Available in hobby shops now, the GP7 can be found decorated for units owned by the Lackawanna, Louisville & Nashville, Maine Central, Pittsburgh & Lake Erie, Reading, and Santa Fe. A second run has already been announced, as well, for an estimated late 2009 delivery and it will include units lettered for the Chesapeake & Ohio, Florida East Coast, Pennsylvania, Texas & Pacific, and Western Pacific. More roadnames will surely follow in years to come. Each scheme is available in two different roadnumbers along with an undecorated model and uniquely numbered unpowered versions are being offered, too.

EMD's Ugly Duckling

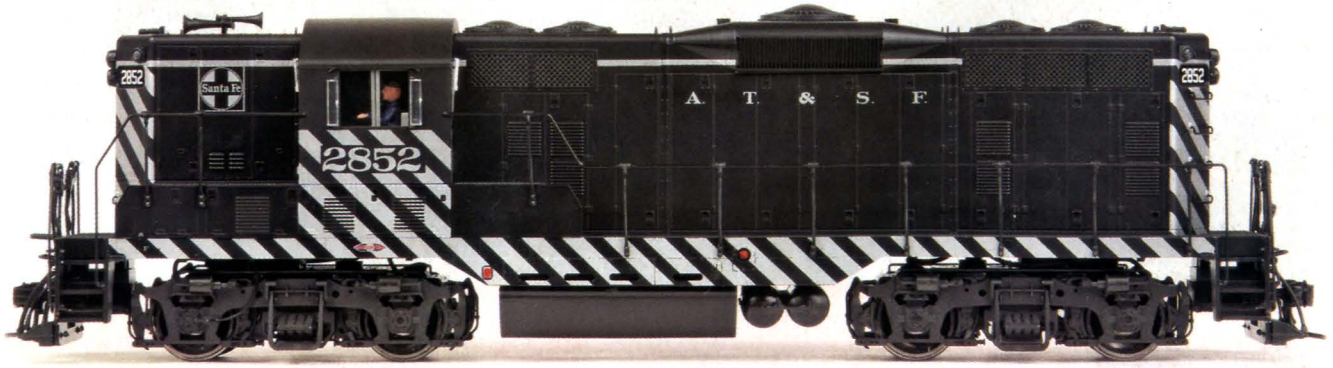
EMD designer Dick Dilworth was the man mostly responsible for developing a diesel locomotive with greater versatility than any EMD yard or road locomotive in use by the railroads in the late 1940s. The American Locomotive Company had hit upon the idea of an all-purpose locomotive back before the Second World War with their 1,000 horsepower road switcher known as the RS-1. It provided good visibility for switching duties yet rode on type B road trucks making it usable on the mainline while also having the capacity to carry a steam generator for passenger train service.

Likewise, Dilworth set out to develop a multipurpose locomotive with similar traits, but with higher horsepower. First of all, the new model would not be a streamlined beauty like EMD's F- and E-unit diesels, but rather ugly in form suggesting functionalism above all else. The carbody would be fashioned so that the engineer could see clearly whether going forward or in reverse and the crew would have easy access to the mechanical systems, keeping maintenance down time to a minimum. Secondly, it would be equipped with sufficient horsepower for the greatest usefulness. In other words, the locomotive could be used on the mainline in multiple units, assigned to branchline duties when required, or just as easily handed over to a yardmaster for switching assignments. Dilworth summed this all up in the model designation for the new EMD diesel: the GP.

In 1949, EMD changed the face of dieseldom with its debut of the 1,500 horsepower GP7. Over 2,700 of these locomotive were sold to 74 railroads including 5 cabless booster units through late 1954 and, because of its popularity, the GP7 can be partially blamed for the demise of the steam locomotive.

EMD then redesigned the 567B V-16 prime mover used in the GP7 and squeezed another 250 horsepower out of it. This 567C engine variant accompanied the new 1,750 horsepower GP9 model first delivered in January of 1954. This Geep, which changed little from the GP7 in general appearance and size, proved to be an even more popular locomotive than its predecessor selling over 4,000 units by the time the GP9 production line was shut down in November 1960; it was superseded by the GP18.

These early four-axle General Purpose locomotives were in great demand for most of their production lives as railroads rushed to finish the changeover from steam to diesel. New Geeps were turned out at an average rate of 2-1/2 units per day at the EMD plants in La Grange, Illinois, Cleveland, Ohio, and by the General Motors Diesel Division (GMD) in London, Ontario. These early Geep brothers certainly made a lasting impression on the industry as a few still served on the big class one railroads till the end of the Twentieth Century —



Once considered an ugly duckling by the industry, the GP7 has emerged as a true American railroad classic. EMD delivered a total of 2,576 GP7s to the US market, Canadian roads purchased 112 units, and 5 cabless GP7Bs were built for the Santa Fe, all between October 1949 and April 1954. The early Geep's appearance changed little over the years even as it transitioned from the 1,500 horsepower GP7 to the 1,750 horsepower GP9, but Atlas O has successfully captured all of the little visual nuances on their model distinguishing it as an accurate Phase II GP7 variant.

some 50 years after the first model rolled off EMD's assembly line.

Atlas O's Beautiful Geep

The new Atlas O GP7, designated as a Phase II variant, follows the manufacturer's 2005 GP9 release in utilizing the former Red Caboose Geep tooling. To the untrained eye, one may even conclude they are visually the same carbody, but this is not the case. The most obvious detail difference between the two brothers as modeled by Atlas O are the number of ten-louvered vents located beneath the cab on the battery storage hatches; the GP7 has three sets and the GP9 has one set. The observer will also note that the first three tall engine compartment doors of the GP9 contain louvered vents whereas the GP7 does not. Finally, look closely at the handrail stanchion fittings. The GP7 has cast stanchion fittings with nut-bolt-washer details while the GP9s utilized a cheaper formed C-shaped fitting that continued to be used on most subsequent Geep production.

With that said, you may be asking yourself just what makes Atlas O's new offering a Phase II model? Well, EMD began making changes to their original GP7 (Phase I) design as early as March of 1952, the first of which was the addition of oval shaped perforations in the fuel tank skirting for easier inspection. This followed about four months later with the dynamic brake fan being increased in size from 36 inches to 48 inches in diameter, although they still maintained their cap top style shroud matching the smaller 36-inch diameter rooftop radiator cooling fans. Finally, in March of 1953, EMD eliminated the two sizes of tall hood doors originally utilized for accessing the engine compartment making them all 82 inches in height. As we have come to expect from Atlas O, all of the telltale signs of a Phase II GP7 are present on their replica.

At 13 inches long over the pilots, the Atlas O Geep is a correctly proportioned 1:48-scale model of the 52-foot long locomotive and, consistent with past Atlas O products, the level of detail on this model is topnotch, too. To begin with, the correct compartment doors, latches, hinges, vents, and grilles are crisply molded in the carbody. Detail parts such as the brass three-chime air horns, metal lift rings, the square sand fill hatches, metal wire handholds, safety chains, coupler cut bars, air reservoir tanks, under frame bell, pilot drop steps, windshield wipers, positionable wind deflectors, cab window glazing with sliding side windows, and lever-style brake stand have been separately applied to the superstructure with the addition of brake cylinders, sand lines, swing hangers, and a speed recorder appropriately added to the well-modeled Blomberg style trucks. Finally, the walkways exhibit raised safety tread pattern and the perforations in the pilot steps and footboards are completely see-through. Sunshades, armrests, and air hoses are also included for consumer application.

Of special note regarding the exquisite detail found on this model, are the add-on rooftop cooling fan housings. The 36-inch and 48-inch cap-top fans actually have the entire prototype fans' 36 vanes delicately reproduced with free turning fan blades visible beneath. Also worth mentioning, the walkways' wire handrails and end rails are supported by the appropriate-style stanchion fittings, as mentioned earlier. However, cast in brass, these stanchions are easily bent

Wearing a well-executed rendering of the Zebra stripe paint scheme, our number 2852 represents one of the 249 GP7s purchased by the Santa Fe between 1950 and 1953 as they began to replace steam locomotives with diesel-electrics. Between 1972 and 1981, most of these units, including 2852, would be rebuilt into GP7 units by the Santa Fe shops where they received chopped short hoods for better visibility, round-roof or Topeka angled cabs, and, after removing dynamic brakes, received four-stack liberated exhaust systems. The prototype for our particular Atlas O sample would continue serving as a GP7 until March 1989.

Details, details, and more details. As always, this Atlas O model is chock full of them! Visible here are separately applied railings with brass stanchions, positionable wind deflectors, sliding cab windows, painted crew figures, windshield wipers, brass air horns, sand filler hatch, working end platform drop step, perforated platform steps, and working LED headlight and marker lights. Note also the nicely modeled Blomberg truck sideframes with add-on brake cylinders, air lines, speed recorder with cable, and swing hanger.

This end view of the long hood shows additional details applied to the Atlas O model: brake and MU air hoses (consumer applied), coupler lift bar, safety chain, wire handholds, metal lift rings, and operating magnetic knuckle coupler. Whether you like the Santa Fe's Zebra stripe paint scheme or not, the sharp opaque aluminum stripes and crisp lettering applied by Atlas O to their model is first-rate. Following prototype painting diagrams, these rear end chevron stripes accurately point downward while the stripes on the nose point up.

and care should be taken when handling the locomotive.

The quality of the paint and lettering application on our sample was excellent as usual for an Atlas O product. Wearing the Zebra stripe scheme (circa 1950 – 1959) for Santa Fe number 2852, the manufacturer was careful to pick a road-number of an actual Phase II production unit ordered with dynamic brakes. One of a group of 30 GP7s (2849 – 2878) delivered to the Santa Fe in June of 1953, number 2852 would later be renumbered 2157, go through a rebuilding process in May of 1979 transforming her into a GP7 with a chopped short hood and an angled Topeka cab, and continue to serve the railroad until she was retired in march of 1989.

Atlas O's rendition is quite convincing for the 2852 in the first decade or so of her career with three-chime air horns correctly located on the roof of the short hood and sharp aluminum diagonal striping enhancing the satin black carbody. Key to successfully capturing this Santa Fe paint scheme is having the chevron-like stripes on the end of the long hood pointing down while the stripes on the nose point up — clearly a detail that has not slipped by the research team at Atlas O!

The manufacturer's now-standard construction practice of utilizing a plastic body shell and diecast metal frame, trucks, and fuel tanks give the GP7 model an overall weight of 4 pounds, 2.2 ounces. Combined with its two vertically truck-mounted, flywheel-equipped can motors, our 2-rail sample had no problem pulling a consist of 28 freight cars around a layout incorporating the locomotive's suggested minimum turn radius of 36 inches. All wheels met National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) RP25 and gauge specifications and the magnetic-style operating knuckle couplers were mounted at the correct height. I'm happy to report that there were no operational anomalies encountered during any of my test runs.

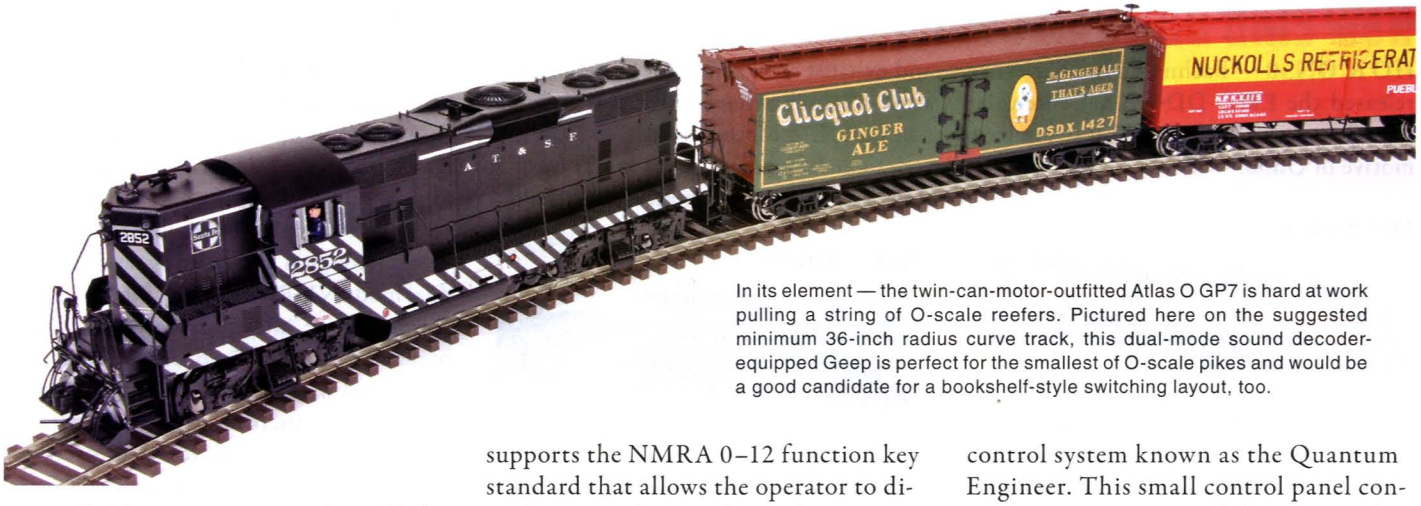
A close-up view of the 48-inch diameter cap-top dynamic brake fan. Typical of the five cooling fans on the GP7 model, the fan housing has the correct number of vanes (36) and a freely rotating, silver, ten-bladed fan can be seen beneath.

Quantum: The GP7's Dual-Mode Sound Decoder

Further enhancing the modeler's experience, whether you're an analog Direct Current or a Digital Command Control operator, is the GP7's onboard Quantum dual-mode sound and control decoder as developed by QS Industries. There are a great many features within the QSI system for both DC and DCC enthusiasts to enjoy. First up is the Regulated Throttle Control (RTC) option, which, as described by the manufacturer, "makes the locomotive operate as though it had the mass and inertia of a prototype locomotive." In our case, this meant the GP7 resisted starting up too quickly from neutral as well as resisted changes in speed once in motion. It definitely takes a little practice to get used to; you as the modeler will need to be patient, advancing the throttle slowly and waiting for the response.

A direct benefit of RTC and its associated Back Electro Motive Force (BEMF) technology is that the speeds of our test unit ranged from an impressive, consistent minimum one scale mile per hour to a prototypical maximum velocity approaching 80 scale miles per hour. Once I got the hang of it, I found RTC to be a neat feature out on the mainline, but somewhat frustrating during delicate switching maneuvers in the yard where a quicker response is definitely necessary. Luckily, throttle operation on this decoder can be reprogrammed in DC or DCC mode to a standard control where a more immediate response to throttle changes can be realized.

Other highlights of the control aspects of the Quantum System include directionally controlled golden-white LED headlights and red LED marker lights, as well as a very cool feature for analog



In its element — the twin-can-motor-outfitted Atlas O GP7 is hard at work pulling a string of O-scale reefers. Pictured here on the suggested minimum 36-inch radius curve track, this dual-mode sound decoder-equipped Geep is perfect for the smallest of O-scale pikes and would be a good candidate for a bookshelf-style switching layout, too.

controlled layouts, in particular, called Helper mode. Multiple locomotive consisting used to be an option reserved for DCC modelers, but with Quantum, DC operators may program their engines to be a lead, mid, end, or even a pusher unit. The end result being a locomotive that has different lights and sounds enabled or disabled, as appropriate for that unit's position in the consist.

Of course, the biggest benefit of the Quantum System for the O-scale modeler are the digital sounds that it produces. Emanating from a speaker housed in the GP7's fuel tank, audio of an genuine 567 prime mover (complete with a noisy lifter!), horn and bell sounds, squealing brakes, air compressor, coupler crash, cooling fans, generator whine, and the like come in loud and clear to the bystander. In DCC mode, Quantum supports the NMRA 0–12 function key standard that allows the operator to directly access these authentic locomotive sounds. In particular, one of my favorite sound effects, considering our sample features a dynamic brake blister, is the dynamic brake function F5. Engaging this feature while in motion will reduce the roar of the prime mover to an idle and turn on the powerful sounding dynamic brake-cooling fan. The audio effect will automatically shut off when the speed of the GP7 drops below seven scale miles per hour or when the engine is throttled up.

Under analog conditions, the operator has access to plenty of these sound features and programmable functions too, but their manipulation via a standard DC transformer's throttle and direction controls can be challenging. That's why I recommend traditional operators invest in QSI's analog remote control system known as the Quantum Engineer. This small control panel connects to your existing DC power pack allowing you to directly and easily command most of the features incorporated in this locomotive.

A True American Railroad Classic

Perhaps the unrefined lines of the bulky-bodied GP7 inspired thoughts of an ugly duckling when it appeared on the rails for the first time but, to current railfans, the first Geep is as true an American classic as are the Chevrolet Corvette and mom's apple pie. Atlas O hasn't let us O scalers down one bit in its 1/48-scale representation of this iconic Electro Motive Division prototype either. Once again, this manufacturer receives a 10 out of 10 on my scoreboard for accuracy, quality, and pure operating enjoyment.

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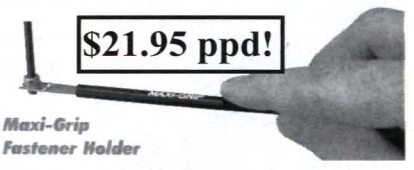

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New EMD DD40AX Centennial and Baldwin 4-6-0 steam locomotive

HO & ON30 — Bachmann Industries has released the EMD DD40AX Centennial in HO, and the Baldwin 4-6-0 steam locomotive in On30.

HO Scale

The EMD DD40AX Centennial is available in the following roadnumbers: Union Pacific 6932 (#62101), 6927 (#62102), 6915 (#62103), and 6943 (#62104). The locomotive is DCC-equipped for speed, direction, and lighting, and features dual mode NMRA decoder with 8-pin plug, two skew wound motors with four flywheels, twelve-wheel drive, an LED headlight (constant lighting), weathered air intakes and exhaust stacks, numerous detail parts, scale 42-inch wheels with RP25 wheel contours, E-Z Mate Mark II couplers, and is designed for aftermarket sound installation. The locomotive retails for $125.00.

On30 Scale

The Baldwin 4-6-0 steam locomotive has been released with a steel cab in the following roadnumbers: Greenbriar & Big Run Lumber Co. #31 (#28657); ET&WNC #12 (#28670) painted green with gold lining and red windows; ET&WNC #11 (#28671) painted black with red windows and white pinstripes; black unlettered (#28696); and painted unlettered (#28698) black with red windows and white trim.

A painted unlettered version (#28697) is available painted black with a wood cab, as well.

The locomotive is DCC-equipped for speed, direction and lighting, and features dual mode NMRA decoder with 8-pin plug, flywheel drive, idler gear box, diecast frame, boiler and cab, machined, blackened wheels, additional diecast detail parts; easy-to-install options including three headlight/backup light styles (oil, acetylene, electric), three smoke stack styles (cap, Rushton, tapered), and three fuel loads (wood, coal, oil) are included with each model. The locomotive is equipped with E-Z Mate Mark II couplers. It retails for $350.00.

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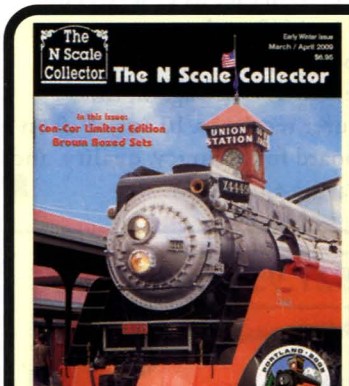

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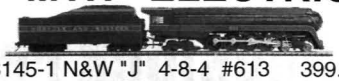

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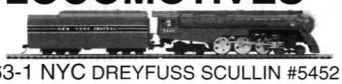

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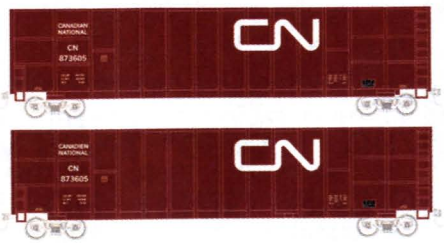
Navy Blue Angels boxcar ready to launch

New rollingstock from Deluxe Innovations

N — Deluxe Innovations has announced the release of two new boxcars and a new woodchip gondola. The fully assembled models will be available in the fourth quarter of 2009.

U.S. Navy Blue Angels (#240521) is a Military Honors series 40-foot boxcar honoring the U.S. Navy's Flight Demonstration Squadron. Formation of the Blue Angels was ordered on April 24, 1946 and their first flight demonstration was later that year, on June 15, at their home base in Florida. The Blue Angels serve as positive role models and goodwill ambassadors for the U. S. Navy and Marine Corps. The boxcar will retail for $29.95.

A 40-foot boxcar with roofwalk will be available for Missouri Pacific. It will be available as a single (#140711), two-pack (#140712), or a three-pack (#140713). The boxcars are brown with large white "Buzz Saw" herald. One car in each multi-pack will have Missouri-Illinois (MI) reporting marks. There are six different roadnumbers in this run. The two MP numbered cars in the 3-pack both have ACI tags. The following are the roadnumbers and their sets: single: MP 125764, two-pack: MP 125795, MI 190273, and three-pack: MP 126854, MP 127168, MI 190266. The single car retails for $24.95, two-packs retail for $49.90, and three-packs retail for $74.85.



A deep rib woodchip gondola will be released for Canadian National. It will be available as a single car (#100411), in a two-pack (#100412), in a three-pack (#100413), and in a four-pack (#100414). There are ten different roadnumbers in the second run of this road. The cars are brown with the large CN "Wet Noodle" logo. On one side the roadname is spelled out "Canadian" and the other side "Canadien" National. All cars bear CN reporting marks. The following available roadnumbers and their sets will be available: single 873605; two-pack 873628 and 873636; three-pack 873639, 873660, and 873673; and four-pack: 873600, 873611, 873642, and 873654. The single car will retail for $19.95, two-packs will retail for $39.90, three packs will retail for $59.85, and the four-packs will retail for $79.80.

Deluxe Innovations, 9 Whippany Rd Unit 10, Whippany, NJ 07981-1540; 973-887-3919; Fax: 973-887-5123; E-mail: info@deluxeinnovations.com; www.deluxeinnovations.com

Silver Streak rollingstock re-released from Ye Olde Huff N Puff

HO — Ye Olde Huff N Puff is re-releasing the original silver streak models. The kits are made using the original dies, molds ,and castings. They feature pre-painted and lettered scribed wood sides, one-piece molded styrene ends, and cast metal detail parts. Trucks and couplers are not included. Cars are decorated for the classic age of steam.

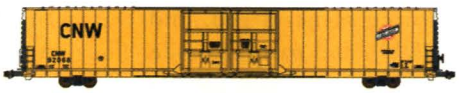
The available rolling stock includes 36-foot and 40-foot boxcars, 40-foot truss rod boxcars, 40-foot and 50-foot double door boxcars, 40-foot reefers, 40-foot truss rod reefers, 4 wheel, standard, drover/combination and truss rod cabooses. Prices vary between $20.00 and $29.00 depending on paint scheme, car type, and roadnames. For more information contact your local hobby store or go to www.yeoldehuffnpuff.com.

Ye Olde Huff N Puff, P.O. Box 1103, Lewistown, PA 17044; 717-248-8935; E-mail: info@yeoldehuffnpuff.com, www.yeoldehuffnpuff.com

New run of 86-foot auto parts boxcars

N — Bluford Shops is releasing a new trio of 86-foot auto parts boxcars. These cars have injection molded plastic bodies, etched metal details, operating knuckle couplers, accurately appearing trucks, and cushion draft gear enclosures. The boxcars will retail for $24.95 for single cars, and $49.90 for 2-packs. They are due in Sept/Oct 2009.

The first set of the cars is a Union Pacific single car (#86221) and 2-pack (#86222). In 1983, the merger-enlarged Union Pacific adopted this paint scheme. Cars from the WP and MoPac fleets carried their original roadnumbers. The single car has a UP number while the 2-pack has Western Pacific and Missouri Pacific roadnumbers. There are variations in placement of other lettering as per the prototypes. Even the logo on the UP car is in a different place. This kind of variation seems to be common on today's Union Pacific fleet.



A Chicago & North Western (#86201) single car and 2-pack (#86202) is painted yellow. In 1980, Chicago & North Western changed from boxcar red to this yellow and black scheme with a three-color logo on many boxcars. The C&NW logos also changed over the years. These cars were delivered in brown with yellow and black 'Chicago and North Western Railway' logos which was later replaced by 'Employee – North Western – Owned' but by the time these cars were painted yellow, they had long since switched to 'Chicago and North Western System.'

The final set of cars is for CP Rail (MILW) single car (#86211) and the 2-pack (#86212). CP Rail's auto parts fleet includes former Milwaukee Road cars like these. The single car is shown here. The lettering arrangement for the single is the same as the upper image. The painted door bars and area around the door latches on this batch seems to be unique to CP Rail.

Bluford Shops, P.O. Box 152, Bluford, IL 62814; 618-822-6833; Fax: 618-822-6833; E-mail: blufordshops@aol.com; www.bluford-shops.com

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New body style announced from Accurail

HO — Accurail has released new rolling-stock. An ACF covered hopper, a 40-foot combo door boxcar, a 50-foot double plug door boxcar, a 40-foot combo door boxcar, a 40-foot PS-1 boxcar, a 55-ton USRA hopper, a 50-foot double door boxcar, a new body style of a 6-panel outside braced boxcar, and a 40-foot single sheath wood boxcar.

An ACF covered hopper has been released for L&N (#2086). It is painted white with black lettering. Its roadnumber is 241506. The hopper retails for $13.98.

A 40-foot combo door boxcar is available for Great Northern (#3807). GN 12734 is painted sky blue with white lettering and a white goat herald. The boxcar retails for $12.98.

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A 50-foot double plug door boxcar has been released for Western Pacific (#5408). It is painted boxcar red with yellow writing. The roadnumber is WP 60638. It retails for $12.98.

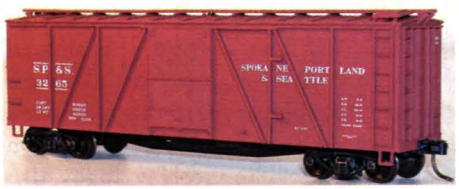
A 40-foot combo door boxcar is now available for CB&Q (#3808). It is painted red with white lettering, and the Burlington Route herald is painted black and white. It has the "Everywhere West" slogan painted in white beneath the herald. CB&Q 41026 retails for $12.98.

A 40-foot PS-1 boxcar is now available for Virginian (#3445). It is painted boxcar red with white lettering, and the Virginian herald on the right end of the car. The roadnumber is VGN 63285. The boxcar retails for $12.98.

A new 55-ton USRA hopper has been released for Southern Railway (#2559). It is painted black with white lettering. The roadnumber is 112283. The hopper retails for $12.98. It is also available in a three number set (#25594) which retails for $37.98.

A 50-foot double door boxcar is now available for Southern Railway (#5914). It is painted boxcar red with white lettering, the center of the "O" in Southern is painted green to go along with the slogan "Gives the Green to Innovations." The roadnumber is 34827. The boxcar retails for $12.98.

Accurail's 7200 series introduces an new body style. The boxcars are 6-Panel outside braced with wood doors and dreadnaught ends. The available cars are: Undecorated (#7200), Data Only (#7298), painted mineral red, and Data Only (#7299), and painted oxide. They retail for $12.98 each.



A new 40-foot single sheath wood boxcar is now available for SP&S (#7016). It is painted red with white lettering. Its roadnumber is 3265. The boxcar retails for $12.98.

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HO — The Hobby Smith has announced the release of the Spokane, Portland & Seattle E7A #750 in the broadband paint scheme. The locomotive is being manufactured for The Hobby Smith by Broadway Limited.

The BlueLine locomotive is ready-to-run with DC sound; and sound in DCC with the addition of a basic motor decoder. SP&S 750 was the only E7 owned by the SP&S and was painted into the broadband scheme in the early 1960s. The locomotive retails for $199.99.

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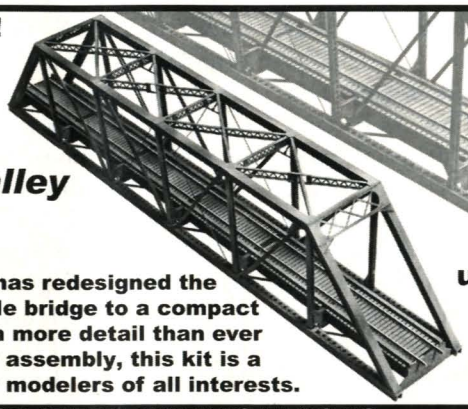

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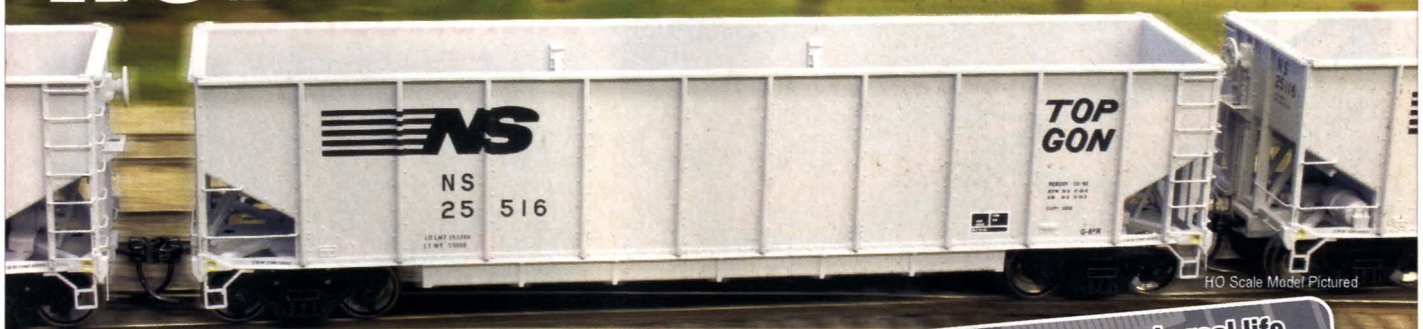

HO Scale Model Pictured

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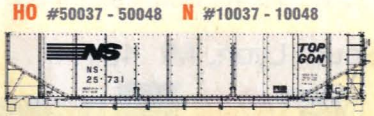
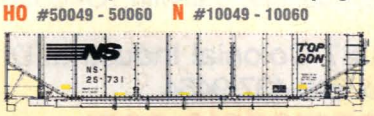


G-86R w/ TopGon Logo & Yellow Striping
HO #50049 - 50060 N #10049 - 10060



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New paint schemes for Pullman-Standard PS-2CD 4740 covered hopper

HO — Tangent Scale Models has released a third run of Pullman-Standard PS-2CD 4740 covered hoppers.

The hopper is available in eight new paint schemes. The schemes are: Milwaukee Road "original gray," available in six roadnumbers; Norfolk & Western "original gray" or sometimes known as the "Hamburger Scheme" in twelve roadnumbers; TLCX Bunge Corp. "original yellow/black" in six roadnumbers; TLCX Early & Daniel "original white/black" in three roadnumbers; TLCX Producer's Grain "original gray" in six roadnumbers; TLCX Tabor & Company "original blue/black" in a single number; TLCX Tabor & Company "original blue/black" with placard in a single number; and TLCX Tabor & Company "original gray/black," available in a single roadnumber.

Also available are the following schemes: BNSF "circle-cross brown," DRGW "original orange," EL "original gray," MP "original gray," TLCX WWHill, Williamsville IL, TLCX Yellow Lease, TLCX Yellow Lease Pillsbury, CSX "beige," N&W "Claytor font," and UP "original gray."

Pullman-Standard originally produced these cars between 1966 and 1972, and they still remain in service throughout the US, Canada, and Mexico wearing many Class 1 and lease paint schemes.

The model features etched metal running boards and crossover platforms; wire detail parts to withstand handling and provide uniform paint color; road-specific details; and Kadee scale couplers with coupler lift bars, plus metal wheels. The hoppers retail for $42.95 each.

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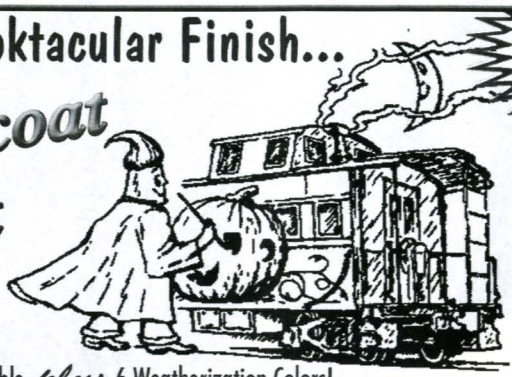

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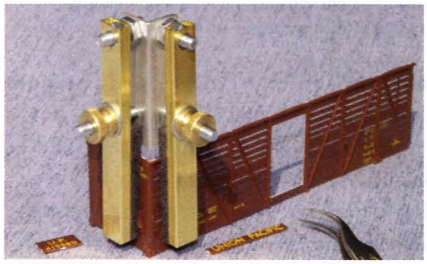

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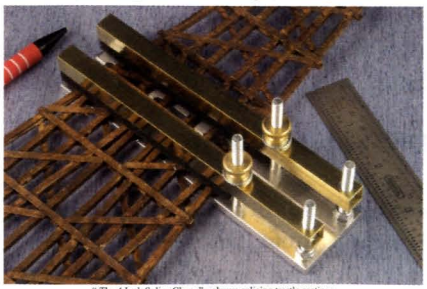

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HO Scale Models

REVIEW HO

Return of a Thoroughbred

Broadway Limited's Paragon 2 Hudson

Review and Photos by David Otte

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By-The-Numbers

4-6-4 J-1d/1e
Broadway Limited Imports
HO 1:87 • Type: Steam
Traction Tires? Yes

Pull Power (Ozs @ Full Slip)

Pull	÷	Loco Wt	=	Efficiency
6.6		13.7		48.2%

Volts	Amps
12	0.71

Analog DC

Start Volts = 7.2

Volts	Amps	Scale MPH
8.0	0.33	1.8
10.0	0.36	15.9
11.0	0.43	47.9
12.0	0.46	78.6

DCC

Speed	Step (of 128)	Scale MPH
Min	2	1.8
Mid	64	15.6
Top	128	90.2

The BLI model exhibits details galore with separately applied hand rails, coupler lift bar, train line air hose, illuminated headlight, numberboards, class lights, brass bell, deck mounted air pumps behind rock shields, and a see-through boiler tube pilot. Note the dummy knuckle coupler included on this model. While it will couple up with most working knuckles making double heading locomotives a possibility, the pilot would definitely have to be modified to incorporate a working Kadee-style coupler.

WELL, it has been almost seven years now since Broadway Limited first entered the marketplace with what would later be hailed as the "Model of the Year" for 2002: the HO-scale New York Central J-1e Hudson. It was the first ready-to-run steam locomotive to feature a well-detailed model with factory-installed Digital Command Control and a realistic sound system, developed by QS Industries for BLI, setting a precedent for all 1/87-scale locomotive models that followed. *Model Railroad News* first covered this monumental locomotive in the November 2002 issue and one of the many attributes of this model I became enamored of was the speed control feature it offered through the motor decoder's Back EMF function. Consistent speed levels, especially at the low end, could finally be achieved despite variable track conditions. However, it wasn't long after this model's introduction when a patent dispute erupted in the DCC industry regarding the calibrated speed control technology being utilized with Back EMF, and BLI was unable to continue offering this feature in subsequent models.

Today, these legal issues appear to be behind us and BLI has come full circle with their latest re-issue of this NYC Thoroughbred as it now features the company's in-house-developed Paragon 2 system. Paragon 2 offers a DC/DCC decoder, advanced sound system, and Back EMF-based speed control in a single package customized for the specific locomotive at hand. This Hudson release also marks the first BLI model to feature a working exhaust system that is synchronized with the rotation of the drivers and the chuff sound effects. This BLI 4-6-4 definitely offers the model railroader both something old and something new and merits a second look.

Birth of the Hudson

Perhaps you're already familiar with how the New York Central's Hudson class came about, but it's certainly a story worth telling again as we analyze this revamped scale miniature. The first Hudson, named after the river that flows along the New York Central's trackage, was delivered to the railroad by the American Locomotive Company on February 14, 1927. The 4-6-4 was the

Number 5391 represents one of twenty J-1d 4-6-4s delivered to NYC subsidiary CCC&StL in early 1930. Although the manufacturer mislabeled her as a J-1e and the model lacks the details of the class's Elesco feedwater heater, BLI did properly pair this engine up with the enormous PT tender she worked with during the last decade of service. Note that both the drivers and the ten wheels of the rigid rear tender truck of this model act as electrical pickups.

brainchild of NYC's Chief Mechanical Engineer Paul Walter Kiefer in his efforts to find a replacement for the Pacific type Locomotive (4-6-2), which was fast becoming inadequate for the changing operating conditions of passenger train service. By the mid-1920s, the passenger business was booming and the existing Pacific class locomotives could not keep up with the ever-increasing length of the trains. The NYC 4-6-2s were pretty much limited to nine heavyweight passenger cars, but a new locomotive was being sought that could handle a dozen or more cars while keeping the size of the locomotive about the same. Kiefer's new design, with its larger firebox and four-wheel trailing truck, proved to be markedly superior to the Pacific's in both capacity and efficiency.

Classified as a J-1a, the first 4-6-4, number 5200, was so successful in tests that the NYC would eventually purchase a total of 275 copies of the locomotive. The NYC Hudson continued to be produced until 1938 with the arrival of the J3a class Super-Hudson. Some 4-6-4s were assigned to hauling the Central's Great Steel Fleet starting in the mid-1930s, including the *Twentieth Century Limited* and the *Empire State Express*. Number 5200, which planted the seeds for success of this famous passenger engine class, was retired in 1952. By the end of 1956, the last Hudson was gone.

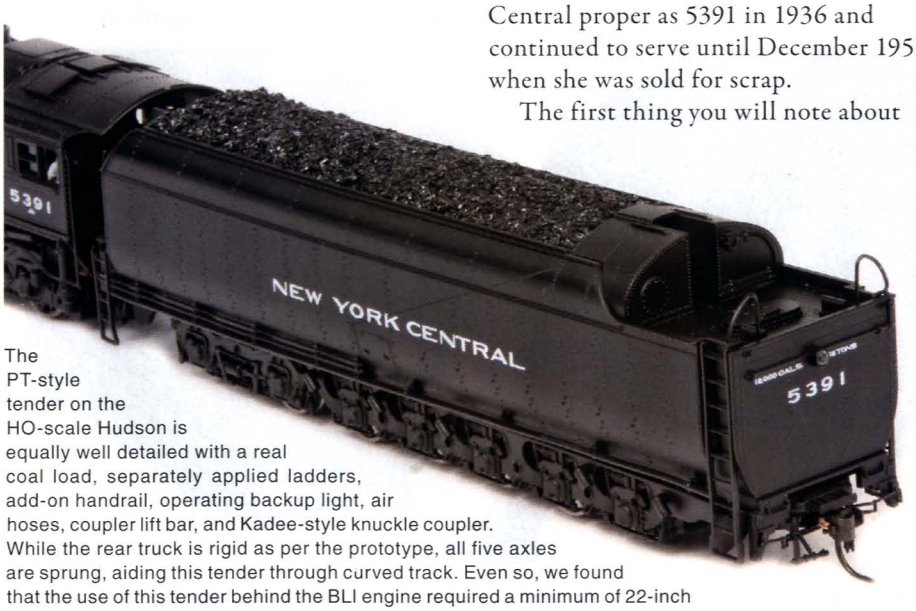
Several sub-classes of the Hudson were produced based on a modified design of the 5200 including the J-1b, J-1c, J-1d, and J-1e. As established in our previous review, the Broadway Limited model best represented a class J-1e 4-6-4, most notably the 5343 and 5344, which were the last two J-1e types built and the only members of the class to feature roller-bearing-equipped drivers and tender truck wheels. Like the first J-1a, the class as a whole had in common 25 x 28 inch cylinders, 79-inch-diameter drivers, a boiler pressure of 225 pounds, and 42,300 pounds of tractive force with an additional 10,900 pounds of force available from the booster engine in the trailing truck. However, the J-1e had a larger tender, it weighed 9,000 pounds heavier at 352,000 pounds, Baker valve gear was utilized instead of the original's Walschaert, and a Coffin feedwater heater was chosen for the NYC proper J-1es rather than the 5200's Elesco unit. While the J-1e model is still being offered as number 5344 this time around, the manufacturer is also producing a J-1d variant complete with a recessed Elesco feedwater heater on top of the smokebox.

The Paragon 2 Thoroughbred

As noted in the 2002 article, the model closely adhered to the prototype's dimensions. This is unchanged with the current production run which continues to feature a nicely tooled plastic boiler, cab, and tender shells riding atop diecast metal frames. The abundance of separately applied detail parts displayed on the original is present on this re-issue as well and now even boasts painted crew figures seated in the cab. Although not quite as impressive as BLI's more recent and pricier brass-hybrid models, the more reasonably priced Hudson still holds its own in the current HO-scale market's steam locomotive roster.

That brings us to our latest review sample, numbered for Hudson 5391. She was originally numbered 6616 from the group of twenty J-1ds (6600 – 6619) delivered to the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis (Big Four), a subsidiary of the NYC Lines, by Alco's Schenectady works in February 1930. She was renumbered into the York Central proper as 5391 in 1936 and continued to serve until December 1954 when she was sold for scrap.

The first thing you will note about



The PT-style tender on the HO-scale Hudson is equally well detailed with a real coal load, separately applied ladders, add-on handrail, operating backup light, air hoses, coupler lift bar, and Kadee-style knuckle coupler. While the rear truck is rigid as per the prototype, all five axles are sprung, aiding this tender through curved track. Even so, we found that the use of this tender behind the BLI engine required a minimum of 22-inch radius curves and negotiating a S-shaped curve without derailing was out of the question. These massive PT tenders, all built between 1943 and 1946 in six different classes, were designed to make possible through running from Harmon, New York to Cleveland and Chicago with only one coaling stop at Waynesport, NY.

our sample model is the rather huge coal tender almost dwarfing this 4-6-4. Referred to as a PT tender, a number of Hudsons working the system's Big Four lines west trackage were so equipped in the post World War Two years. These tenders could carry 46 tons of coal and 18,000 gallons of water eliminating the need for countless fuel stops on these longer runs.

During my research, I found a couple of photos verifying that number 5391 did in fact operate with a PT tender up until the time of her retirement. However, on closer inspection, I uncovered a number of discrepancies between the prototype and the model. First of all, BLI has labeled their replica a J-1e, which the 5391 was not. Secondly, as a J-1d, she was outfitted with an Elesco feedwater heater, details of which are lacking on the model (although the company is offering these details on two other models they are representing as J-1ds). Finally, there are a host of more minor details such as a larger sand dome, the lack of a trailing truck booster, and altered rear drivers that appear on the real 5391 at the time she was equipped with a PT tender that are missing from our sample. I feel BLI can be forgiven on the later points as it would have required additional new tooling, but the mislabeling of the class (both on the box label and the class designation imprinted beneath the cab number on the model) and the feedwater heater mistake could have been avoided with proper research of the prototype, one photo of which was easily accessible through a well-known book on the NYC Hudsons. On the other hand, I will credit this model with a quality fit and finish consistent with BLI's past offerings.

Setting the appearance of the Hudson aside, the real news here regards operation. The first thing I noticed when removing our sample from its packaging was how light it was. Compared to the original release, the new 4-6-4 weighs 5.3 ounces less due, I believe, to the partial removal of the boiler weight in an effort to make room for the new smoke unit. BLI has compensated for this alteration though, by equipping the rear set of drivers of their latest release with traction tires. This modification has had the extra benefit of boosting the drawbar pull of the model from the mediocre 3.1 ounces of the 2002 version to a whopping 6.6 ounces: a passenger consist of 18 heavyweight cars or more is not an issue for this Paragon 2 Hudson!

As a side note, a small rectangular weight was added to the new edition between the boiler and frame at the cylinder assembly to further increase the overall balance and tractive effort. While painted black to keep it as inconspicuous as possible, the block of metal still distracts slightly from the see-through view of the underframe as enjoyed on the original issue.

One thing is for sure, though, the smoke unit does add a new dimension to the Hudson. We're just starting to see working exhaust units in HO scale that rival those already used in O-gauge locomotives for a number of years now, and so far the reaction among HO-scale modelers has been mixed. Some folks think it's the greatest special effect since sliced bread, while others detest it and believe it detracts from the serious side of hobby. I'll leave you to be the judge, but will comment on my experience with this feature. According to the company's press release, the smoke unit is mechanically actuated by wheel movement, but has the capability of puffing harder

Connecting the tender to the locomotive is straightforward. A wiring harness with 8-pin micro plug coming from the tender pushes into the receptacle beneath the hinged tender apron on the engine with the pin under the tender placed in one of two holes on the metal drawbar, which is fastened to a pivot point on the frame beneath the cab. Note also the interior details of the backhead, the hand painted crew figures, and the separately applied hand grabs, as well as the booster engine on the trailing truck.

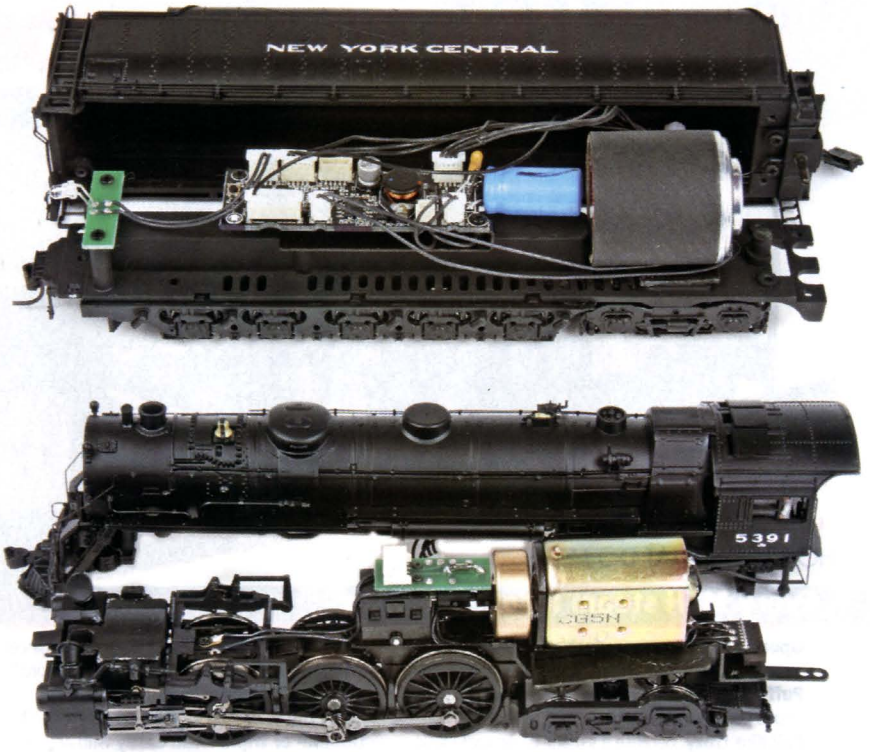
The new Broadway Limited Imports' revamped Hudson provides the modeler with all the sights, sounds, and even simulated exhaust, of these venerable New York Central Thoroughbreds. This accomplishment is in no small part due to the company's newly in-house-developed Paragon 2 electronics, which combine a motor decoder, digital sound system, and back EMF speed control into one factory-installed package. BLI's intricately detailed six-coupled driver set is evident in this photo. Rods, valves, alligator-type crossheads, and guides are all made of nickel silver. The see-through spoked scale 79-inch-diameter drivers are well executed, but the added weight visible between the cylinder and valve gear is somewhat distracting. It's a sacrifice the modeler must endure though, for the inclusion of a working smoke unit, which in my opinion gives this model an edge on steam locomotives already on the market in both HO- and O-scales.

when a greater motor load is detected while also remaining in synch with the chuff sounds. Our sample worked as advertised and quite honestly could give any of the steam locomotives already on the market today with this feature, whether it is in HO or O scale, a run for their money. If all that simulated white exhaust smoke gets to be too much for the train room, it can be turned off manually via a switch behind the removable boiler front or by way of function key F7 in DCC mode. A tube of smoke fluid and a funnel are thoughtfully included with each model.

Now, onto the Paragon 2 electronics. John Sipple, in his May 2009 review of the Paragon 2 AC6000CW, introduced us to this new system and, like our editor, I was very pleased with both the control and audio quality experienced with our review samples. My only real disappointment with it was that, unlike John's pleasing experience of finding his Paragon 2 diesel locomotive factory programmed with an address matching the roadnumber, our sample came with the usual default address of 3. Oh well, you can't always have your cake and eat it too!

Nonetheless, Paragon 2 is similar to past DCC decoders in that it is intuitive to whether the model is being operated on an analog DC or DCC equipped layout. For DC users, BLI recommends the purchase of their DC Master Analog Control Module in order to activate the whistle and bell sounds, control the volume, and even program control variables or CVs with the aid of a DCC system. The module can be had for as little as $32, so those modelers not interested in investing in a DCC system can still fully enjoy the BLI Hudson.

For DCC users, you'll enjoy National Model Railroad Association (NMRA) F0 to F28 functions, function key mapping, and macro recording. This later feature is pretty neat and allows the modeler to record a series of locomotive operations and play it back on command – an auto pilot if you like. You can set it up to repeat the playback from 1 to 14 times or make the recorded operations repeat indefinitely. The function key mapping comes in handy too, especially for those



The tender houses the brains of this operation in the form of the Paragon 2 DC/DCC decoder and sound system circuitry. The digital sound system utilizes a single speaker, which is mounted vertically in a baffle at the front of the tender. Meanwhile, the muscle is all up front in the engine where a precision 5-pole can motor with brass flywheel powers the middle drive axle, which in turn rotates the outer drive wheels via the side rods.

Shown in this photo is the smokebox. Here the new smoke unit is housed in the front of the boiler shell where the modeler has access to the on/off switch.

of us with controllers that only have up to F8 or F12 function keys. For example, while utilizing my Digitrax Zephyr, I reprogrammed the F3 key, normally associated with a coupler sound and hardly ever used on my layout, to control the more useful feature of the F13 key – the grade crossing horn signal.

Some of the more noteworthy steam locomotive function keys outside of the normal headlight, bell, and whistle (has three different whistles from which to choose) include F4 air pump, F5 blow down or increase chuff intensity, F6 water fill sounds when stopped, F10 provides the sounds of coal being shoveled or the auger engaging as appropriate for the model, F11 covers the water injector, and F22 toggles to a second whistle. Function keys F14 through F21 is a collection of background sounds such as passenger announcements or those heard on a farm or in a city. I have mixed feelings about these features as they would normally emanate from stationary points on the layout itself and not the moving locomotive, but some modelers may find an additional fun factor in being able to engage these audio effects. There are a multitude of additional sounds initiated

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automatically too, my favorite of which is the clunk of the power reverse gear when direction changes are made.

Regarding the Paragon 2 whistle, it provides a short whistle blast with a quick press of the F2 key and a longer blast when the button is held down for a few seconds more. Holding the whistle key down for a long blast, releasing quickly and pressing again, then releasing, plays an alternate whistle ending. Furthermore, with the Digitrax DT400 and the NCE Procab DCC controllers, a quillable or fully playable analog whistle function can be enabled. Complete programming instructions for this feature are included in the Paragon 2 Operator's Manual.

On the test track, our sample performed beautifully thanks to the back EMF function. She crept along at less than two scale miles per hour in both analog DC and DCC modes. Top-end speed registered at about 90 scale miles per hour so the locomotive is quite capable of hauling a 15-car passenger consist at a scheduled speed averaging about 60 scale miles per hour per NYC prototype practice. At slightly over seven volts, the DC starting voltage with the locomotive's smoke unit switched on was pretty typical of industry standards for DCC/sound equipped models. The powertrain, with audio silenced, appeared smooth running and almost completely devoid of gear noise operating in either direction. I detected none of the common anomalies caused by the use of traction tires on the rear drivers and found all the RP25 wheels to be in gauge when checked with a NMRA Standards Gauge; operation on rail down to code 70 was not an issue.

Finally, a word of caution is in order regarding minimum track radii for the model versions paired up with the PT tender. While BLI suggests a minimum operating radius of 18 inches, which is sufficient for the bulk of the Hudsons offered with the shorter as-delivered tender, I found the PT tender models require a minimum of 22-inch radius curves. Even at the larger radius, you'll want to avoid any areas of your layout where S-shaped curves are employed as this 14-wheeled tender is not happy going through that track geometry unless a short length of straight track is introduced between the curves.

Final Thoughts

Notwithstanding the detail inconsistencies I encountered on the particular version we sampled, most of the variations of the NYC J-1d/1e being offered appear to be prototypical from what I could tell based on the illustrations on BLI's web site. So, I think the majority of modelers will find the updated Hudson to truly be a positive addition to the HO-scale marketplace. Paragon 2 has a lot of nice qualities about it, which really gives new character to this venerable Hudson rendering, keeping it near the forefront of ready-to-run motive power offerings for years to come.

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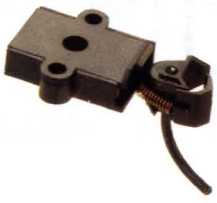
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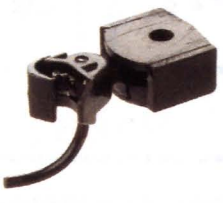
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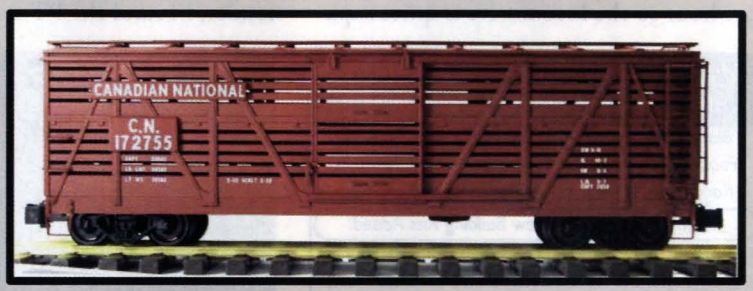

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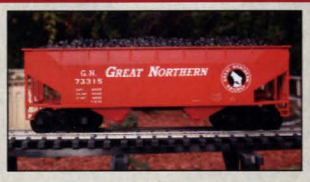

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REVIEW HO

New rigs from Trucks 'N Stuff

Review by Wayne Caulder
Photos by Bill Cawthon

HO scale diecast trucks w/plastic trailers, MSRP: $13.99 each
Peterbilt 389 with 53-foot refrigerated trailer: Vic Hoskins (#080320) and Navajo (#080323)
Kenworth W900L with 53-foot refrigerated trailer: Marten (#8007)
Kenworth W900L with 53-foot dry van trailer: Trucks N' Stuff (#080124)

Manufactured by Tonkin for
Trucks 'N Stuff
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209-469-0115

WHEN immigrating to this country, I was totally oblivious that there were strong opinions as to whether conventionals were better than cab-overs when it came to trucks in the States. To be honest, I first had to learn that a conventional was "a truck with a bonnet" in my lingo! I grew up in a country where a conventional Oshkosh R series was as much the class 8 of Class 8 trucks as was a British ERF cab-over. Sit on the side of a U.S. Interstate for a few minutes and it soon becomes readily apparent that getting hit by a semi doing 85 really would hurt and that cab-overs belong on trash trucks, concrete pumpers, and fire trucks.

If you are an overseas reader, you would be forgiven for thinking that the debate ends there. You would be wrong, but you would be forgiven. You see, around here you learn that in most households there are three things not spoken about around a meal: politics, religion, and money. Sit around a table in a truck stop and you will soon add a fourth category: old-style (or classic) conventionals vs. the new-style, aerodynamic conventionals.

I have read and heard numerous stories of drivers going into their bosses' office when the first truly aerodynamic semis came out and begging them to not be put in one. It may have gotten two more miles per gallon with the flowing surface, but it also got two more mortifications per mile when other truckers commented on it.

The aerodynamic trucks are a lot more prevalent now and they certainly are much better-looking, but there are still some for whom that classic look is what defines a semi. Both of the models that are being reviewed here are current, classic-style conventionals offered by Kenworth and Peterbilt.

For some, trailers are just trailers, especially when it comes to the type on these models. For others, truck trailers become just as fascinating as freight cars. What I have noticed about trailers is how they have grown in length. There was a time when a 40-foot trailer was the norm. Then another five feet was added, then another three. Today, it is not at all unusual to see "53" painted on the side of semi trailers, referring to its length.

The Models

Trucks 'N Stuff is working with Tonkin to bring excellent replicas of major truck lines like Knight, Martin, and Schneider. This review is of one of Truck 'N Stuff's Kenworth W900L and the Peterbilt 389.

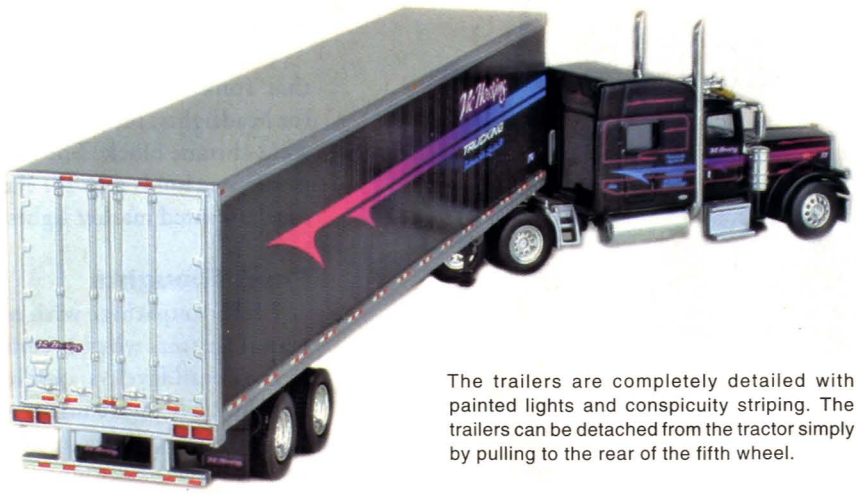
Both trucks come in a clear plastic box. Simple and effective. You can clearly see what you are getting; validated by a sticker on the bottom of the box that identifies the truck and trailer.

Just so you, the reader, know where we are headed in this review, the trucks will be reviewed individually for their own unique points and then some comments will be made on items that the two have in common, including the trailers.

The Peterbilt 389 is a twin-screw (both rear axles are driven), with an 83-inch, low-profile sleeper and a 267-inch wheelbase. Using the Diesel Truck Index book, I was able to verify that other key dimensions were true to scale. Capping that off with a correctly proportioned model makes this a highly accurately formed model. The paint on the Peterbilt was excellent. I did not find any flaws in the chrome work, which is abundant. It adorns the bumper, grill, headlight buckets, visor, gas tanks, exhausts, horns, mirrors, visor.... Get the picture? Personally, those quad roof horns, chrome caps and all truly add authenticity to this model.

The Kenworth W900L carries an 86-inch Studio sleeper and sits on the

We've got the start of a good truck stop here. The new rigs from Trucks N' Stuff feature modern Kenworth W900L and Peterbilt 389 tractors with 53-foot trailers. From left to right: Kenworth W900L decorated for Trucks N' Stuff, Kenworth W900L in Marten colors, Peterbilt 389 in the colorful Vic Hoskins livery, and Peterbilt 389 working for Navajo.



The trailers are completely detailed with painted lights and conspicuity striping. The trailers can be detached from the tractor simply by pulling to the rear of the fifth wheel.

same twin-screw chassis with a 267-inch wheelbase. It is not the extended hood version.

On the Kenworth, the front track was way too narrow, allowing the wheels to sit too deeply inside of the fenders. Measuring the track (the distance from the middle of one tire to the middle of the other, looking at the truck front on) gave credence to my observation. It was six feet instead of the typical seven to seven and one-half feet.

I would rate the mirrors on the Kenworth as okay. I do appreciate the quandary of companies that model HO trucks. For mirror arms to remain true to scale on this size of a model requires that they be very thin: that either means thin plastic bits or expensive photo-etched bits. Thinner mirror arms on this truck would make a vital difference to its credibility as a model, in the same realm that makeovers do for fashion-impaired humans such as me.

The paint job on the Kenworth that I reviewed was a job well done. It was a metallic, difficult-to-pull off-on-an-HO-model. Think about it, you've got to get those metal flakes down to 1/87 the size of the already small real-life ones. The point is that the right amount of flake is critical for a model of this size. Tonkin got it right.

Both trucks come with 53-foot dry van box trailers. I know a number of guys in the various 1/87 chat rooms, message boards, and clubs that are trailer fundies. They can tell the manufacturer of a trailer coming over a hill towards them before they even make eye contact with the cell-phone-glued-to-the-ear driver. I ain't one of those guys. Keep that in mind as I peruse these trailers. I see ribs, I see side marker stripes, I see as many rivets as political opinions. From my observations of sitting next to many a semi at the stoplight, these accurately represent the more important details on a semi-trailer. The latching mechanisms on the doors could be a little crisper in their details and the painted-in rear lights are dismal.

I am a pastor whose church was looking at bringing in some 20-foot containers for extra storage. As the trustees were trying to figure out how much pad would be needed for four containers, I blurted out that each container would be 102 inches wide. "How the heck would you know that?" was the comment one person made. The others' facial expressions reflected the same sentiment. Here's why: I measure countless trailers to verify their scale because it makes me batty that model manufacturers will simply assume that semi tractors have the same width as trailers and thus get only one of the two correct. The Tonkin trailers are right on the money when it comes to length, but a spot over width-wise at 104.5 inches.

One beef I have, and, to be fair, it's not only with Tonkin, is that there is beyond a plethora of box trailers available in HO. Why not make other trailer types? Around where I live, there is probably an equal number of trucks pulling box trailers as there are pulling flat beds, lowboys, step-beds, and tankers, to name a few. Perhaps Trucks 'N Stuff can add some weight to that likelihood.

The pad printing on both trucks was exemplary. With all the ribs and rivets on the trailer any flaw in the printing procedure would be exposed. None found. The livery decals on both the trucks that

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Most manufacturers forget to detail the rear of the tractor, but not Trucks N' Stuff. Here you get a good view at all the added chrome detail and the good-looking oversized exhaust pipes.

I reviewed were outstanding. Tonkin has done a great job with the rigs; Trucks 'N Stuff have made them stand out from whatever else happens to be on the shelf. I did feel, however, that the decals on the Kenworth truck surpassed those on the Peterbilt. Not that the latter were anywhere close to bad, just that the former were that good.

I found the wheels on both trucks to be very inconsistent as far as the holes were concerned. Not all were molded all the way through, thus the hole merely became a chrome indent, instead of a true hole that had nothing behind it.

What makes the models so unique for me is that they come with what Tonkin describes as "fat aftermarket stacks." Some feel that fat stacks on a truck are akin to those rattle trap coffee cans that kids love to put on their cars or, even worse, the drainpipes that pickup truck guys run up through the bed, behind the cab, doing their best to emulate a big rig. Not sure that I would agree with that. A big truck (read real truck) with a big exhaust does not look out of place.

The chassis on these two models are identical, including fifth wheels that are molded into the chassis, mud-flaps, and mufflers. The gas tanks do differ, though. The detail level of the model as you would see it on the street is great, the detail view from someone in the sewer would leave one with a flush of embarrassment. This leads to the same ambiguous feelings one gets when a beautiful model smiles, only to reveal a set of wonky teeth.

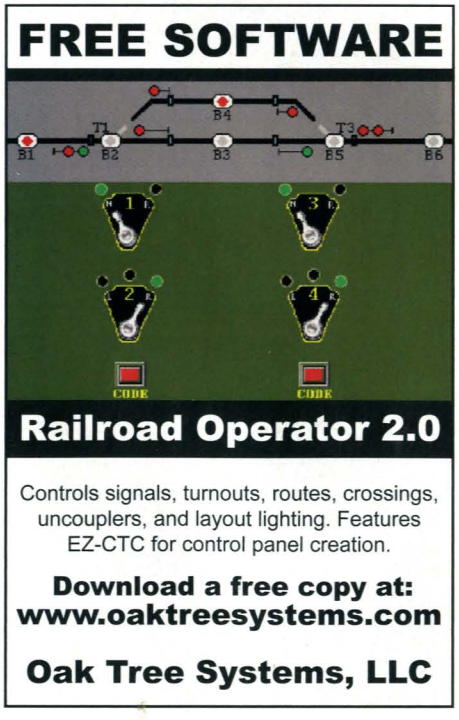
The dual rear tires are a one-piece mold, though most would only be aware of that now that I have pointed it out. There is great tread detail on these tires, and both the tires and the rims are true to scale.

I would really have preferred that Tonkin used plastic inserts for headlights, rather than a solid chrome block. The same preference holds true for the roof-mounted marker lights.

Final Thoughts

I fully empathize with model manufacturers when it comes to the detail level vs. cost level decision. The more mirror arms are made thinner, lights are made as lens inserts, and chassis get more intricately detailed, the more we pay at the store's cart checkout web page or at the cash register. Rightfully so. My desires regarding the aforementioned parts have to be put in the same hopper as countless other desires. A decision has to be made somewhere, so the reviewer's question now becomes one of "are you getting what you are paying for?" These two trucks represent decent value when you have to take into consideration the cost of adding numerous trucks on a layout.

Keeping that in mind and given that Trucks 'N Stuff offers other manufacturer's trucks with a broad range of liveries, you can happily spend your money knowing that you are going to be able to offer a true-to-life vehicle scene on your layout.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1953 tugboat released from Frenchman River Model Works

HO — Frenchman River Model Works has released a kit that is based on a 92-foot 9-inch Diesel Railroad Tug Boat built around 1953. The kit (#211) retails for $98.50.

The Railroad Tug kit is comprised of detailed cast resin structural parts. Pewter detail parts include: twenty tire bumpers, mast, bitts, anchor, fire monitor, and searchlight, along with other pewter detail parts. Laser-cut plastic railings and laser-cut window glazing, rope, and glass bead running lights are also included.

Tug boats, such as the subject of a new kit offered by Frenchman River Model Works, were invaluable to the rail-marine industry. The HO-scale kit is available now.

Tugs were indispensable to the rail-marine industry towing carfloats and station floats out to ships and piers across harbors and coastal waterways of the United States. They also transferred loaded carfloats from one side of harbors to the other as an extension of the rail line across waterways. The tall wheelhouse allowed the ship captain an unobstructed view above carfloats loaded with boxcars.

Frenchman River Model Works, 72191 VM Hwy, Stratton, NE 69043; 308-276-2174; www.frenchmanriver.com

Woodland Scenics Releases New HO AutoScenes

HO — Woodland Scenics is announcing the release of two new HO-scale AutoScenes with vehicle and figures, available for shipping in August. These 1940s- and '50s-style figures capture the simplicity and classic designs of the era. Both AutoScenes are said to be true 1:87 HO-scale models. New from Woodland Scenics:

Chip's Ice Truck is a vintage, dual-wheeled refrigeration truck that is ready to beat the heat with its latest ice delivery. The AutoScene includes ice blocks and three workers to handle the heavy lifting. Chip's Ice Truck (AS5557) retails for $29.99.

No need to worry about heavy loads with Fritz's Front Loader. This piece of tough machinery, along with three burly workers, is able to tackle most construction jobs thrown at the company. Fritz's Front Loader (AS5558) is available for $17.99.

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REVIEW **HO&N**

The Flxible Visicoach

Athearn recreates another classic

Review and Photos by Bill Cawthon

Flxible Visicoach bus, HO scale, MSRP: $22.98/each
Badger Bus Lines, Freeport (#29002)
Consolidated Bus Lines, Roanoke (#29004)
Fred Harvey Bus Lines, Grand Canyon Village (#29006)
Utah Parks Company, Zion (#29007)
Flxible Visicoach bus, N scale, MSRP: $19.98/each
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SINCE their announcement at last year's National Train Show, few vehicle models have been awaited as eagerly as the Athearn Flxible Visicoach bus. The Visicoach was one of the most distinctive buses of the 1950s, continuing the style that first appeared on the Flxible Clipper in the 1930s and ended with the Starliner in 1967. Athearn is currently offering several paint schemes for both HO- and N-scale, with the promise of plenty more to be announced in the future.

Flxible and the Visicoach

The Flxible Company got its start in 1912 when Hugo Young, owner of a motorcycle shop, developed a new sidecar wheel that would flex and tilt as the motorcycle made turns and encountered bumps and dips in the road. Young formed the Flxible Sidecar Company in 1913 and incorporated a year later. The "e" was dropped from "flexible" to make a unique trade name.

Young's sidecar was a hit and the company grew to become the world's largest exclusive producer of sidecars. In 1919, the company's name was changed to the Flxible Company and the name "Flxible" was copyrighted.

When Henry Ford started slashing the price of his Model T, the bottom dropped out of the motorcycle market; by the early 1920s, a Model T cost less than a motorcycle and sidecar.

Faced with shrinking demand, Flxible branched out into the bus and professional car market, building stretched cars for buses and hearses. The first Flxible bus, a stretched Studebaker that could carry twelve passengers, was delivered in 1924.

Flxible switched its focus to intercity coaches in 1936 and the Clipper made its debut in 1939, setting a style that would remain in use for 28 years.

The Visicoach, an enlarged version of the Clipper, went into production in the summer of 1950. The first bus, with serial number 30001, went to Service Coach Line of Dublin, Georgia. However, by the time that bus was delivered at the end of August 1950, serial numbers 30002 to 30024 had already been delivered to other customers. The first Visicoach completed was actually 30003 for Gray Line Tours; it was delivered on July 7, 1950. The final Visicoach, serial number 30925, was delivered to Smoky Mountain Tours on January 10, 1958. In between, a wide variety of customers ordered Visicoaches.

A number of bus lines ordered the Visicoach, but they were by no means the only customers. Schools, universities, government agencies, and even individuals bought the Flxible bus as it was also offered as a deluxe motor home. Movie companies like Columbia, MGM, Universal, and Warner Brothers became owners, as did Continental and Pan American airlines. Railroads were Flxible customers, as well; the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe, Bangor & Aroostock, Chicago, South Shore and South Bend, Reading, Rock Island, and Union Pacific all bought Visicoaches. They were also used to transport some less-than-willing passengers: California's well-known Folsom Prison operated a Visicoach and the U.S. Department of Justice was a big customer.

Visicoaches were also popular tour buses, with Carey and Gray Lines among the major buyers. Most of the major western national parks had Visicoaches operated by independent companies.

Single-bus orders came from Father Flanagan's Boys Town, the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and "Whoopee"

Athearn's new HO Flxible Visicoach is loaded with details like the separately applied horns and the grab iron on the rear. Also notice the sign on the side of the green Fred Harvey bus. The N-scale versions gets the horn and the sign but the grab irons are molded into the body shells.

John Wilfahrt's Orchestra of St. Paul, Minnesota, one of the top polka bands of the 1950s. (Don't chuckle: Whoopee John did very well; custom-built buses weren't cheap, even fifty years ago.)

Many Visicoaches went to Mexico and South America and eight were bought for a transportation company in Cairo, Egypt. All told, 925 Visicoaches were produced between 1950 and 1958 and a number are still in operation, restored by private individuals.

The Visicoach was succeeded by the Starliner, which was the last model to feature the Clipper styling. In 1970, Flxible was acquired by Rohr Industries which changed the busmaker's focus to city transit buses, a specialization that was retained when Flxible was sold again, in 1978, to Grumman. Despite some problems with some early versions, the line was successful and thousands of Grumman Flxibles were ordered by municipal transit companies. Flxible was sold one last time, in 1983, to General Automotive Corporation, which shut the Flxible line down in 1995.

Early Visicoaches were generally powered by Buick "straight-eight" engines and GM engines were offered for most of the production run. Other engines were supplied by Fageol and White. These were mostly gasoline engines; GM diesels weren't offered until later in the production cycle.

The Model

Athearn's replicas of the Visicoach are very nice, capturing the prototype's appearance in both HO- and N-scales. Checking with the calipers shows they are within a scale inch of the correct 96-inch width and 114-inch height. Both HO- and N-models scale out to about a scale 34-feet 5-inches in length, about seven scale inches short of the 35-foot length I found in my research, but I also found sources that listed the length as 33 feet and 34 feet, so I am inclined to say Athearn is pretty well on the money here, as well.

The initial release includes four bus operators with two destinations for each line.

Badger Bus Line (as Badger Coach, the parent company) bought six Visicoaches between December 1950 and June 1953. Badger Buses generally run between Madison and Milwaukee and one is decorated for Madison, but the other has a destination of Freeport, Illinois. I'm not sure why Athearn didn't make the second bus' destination "Milwaukee" as that has been the company's primary service route for many years.

Consolidated Bus Line of Bluefield, West Virginia, bought ten buses on a single order in February and March 1951. The destinations are Charleston, West Virginia and Roanoke, Virginia. Consolidated was a prosperous company but your layout needs to be set between 1951 and the end of 1955; Consolidated was acquired by Virginia Stage Lines in December 1955 and was later absorbed into Trailways.

The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe bought ten Visicoaches for the Fred Harvey Company's Grand Canyon Village in June 1954. The two destinations offered by Athearn are Grand Canyon Village and Hermit's Rest, a rest stop built in 1914 by Harvey on the

The first release includes Badger Bus Lines, Consolidated Bus Lines, Fred Harvey Transportation, and Utah Parks Company. There are two destinations for each livery.

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The Athearn Visicoach is easy to disassemble if you'd like to add a driver and some passengers. Removing a screw in the rear of the model and disengaging a tab on the front is all it takes.

south rim of the Grand Canyon.

The shade of yellow on the Utah Parks Company buses is no accident. Utah Parks Company was a subsidiary of the Union Pacific Railroad when the UP was a concessionaire of the National Parks Service at the Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks. Utah Parks Company bought eight Visicoaches in four separate purchases from June 1953 to August 1956. One of the Athearn models has a Zion Park destination; the other is a chartered bus. The Utah Parks Company was shut down when UP terminated its concession in 1972 and donated the facilities to the National Park Service. At least one of the UTC Visicoaches carried on, though, wearing a coat of bright red paint and ferrying passengers at Cascade National Park.

Both the HO- and N-scale models are top-flight with sharp, well-defined tooling, full interiors, and superior paint and print work. Unless you want to add some weathering, these are ready to add to your layout. Nice details include the separately applied grab iron on the rear of the coach and the colorful "Transportation Department" signs on the Fred Harvey buses.

If you want to add passengers to your bus, Athearn has made it easy. The chassis is secured to the body with a tab in the front and a Phillips-head screw in the rear. After removing the screw, pull down gently on the rear wheels to disengage the tab. Inside, you'll find Athearn added not only a separate steering wheel, but a freestanding shift lever, as well. The N-scale version comes apart in the same way and has the separate steering wheel, but gives up the shift lever.

While I am not a bus expert by any means, I did notice a couple of items that might be noticed by one. First, a truly minor nit: the inner headlights on the front are painted orange. Since the inboard lamps are really fog lamps, they should be more yellow than amber. Second, Athearn neglected to paint the rear bumper silver on the N-scale models. On the HO models, the rear bumper is a separate piece and it's appropriately painted. Third, and this may explain the discrepancy in length, the real Visicoach had a flare at the base of the rear curve that flared into the bumper, adding at least a few inches to the length. This flare is present but ends even with the bumper on both Athearn's HO and N versions. The first two items can be easily fixed on future runs, but the third would require new body shell tooling and, to be honest, I don't think the flaw would bother enough people to make fixing it worthwhile. It certainly won't slow me down from watching for future releases.

And future releases should be plentiful. Athearn could easily wear out the tooling before it reproduced all the liveries worn by the Visicoach (I would definitely buy the "Whoopee John's" bus if Athearn made it).

Final Thoughts

Although we've had a handful of entries in the past few years, good, ready-to-run American-prototype bus models are rare in HO and even rarer in N scale. I am delighted that Athearn fulfilled its promise in spades and delivered an excellent model in both scales. They are definitely worthy of your consideration; check them out at your favorite hobby supplier.

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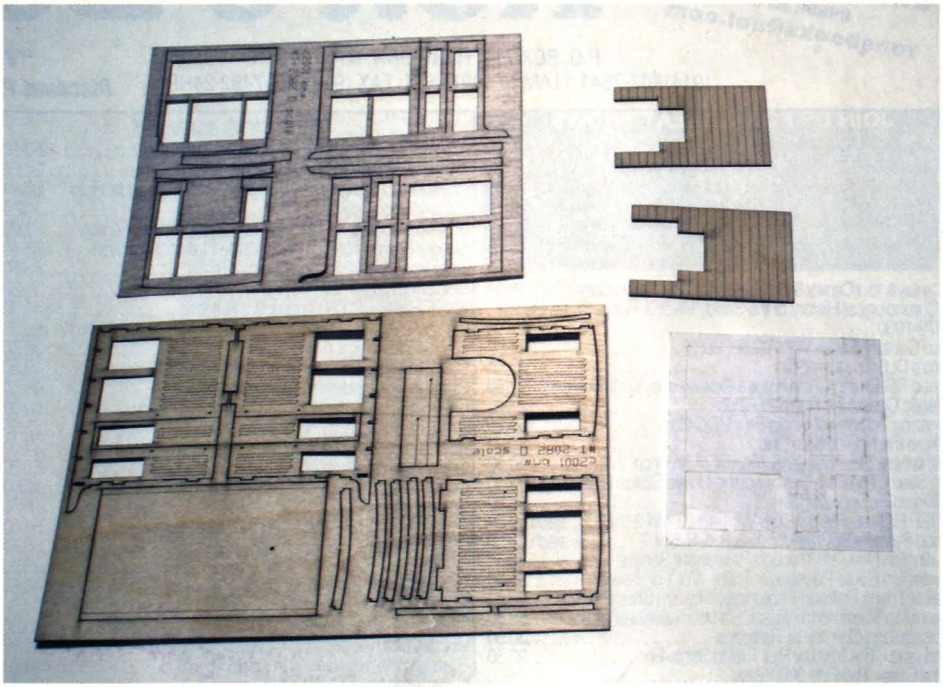


The parts consist of two laser-cut plywood sheets, the cab floor (two shown here), and the plastic window glazing, which is also laser-cut.

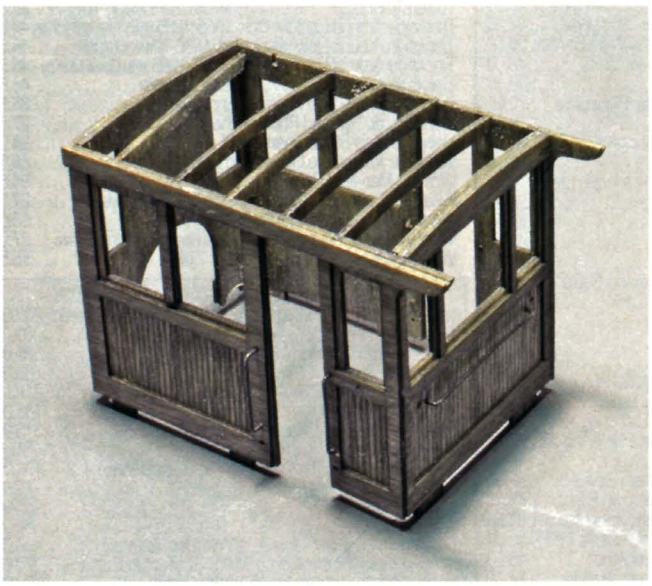
BANTA MODELWORKS offers an extensive line of structure kits in HO-, S-, and O-scales, including close to 20 cab conversions in O-scale alone, of which over half are for Bachmann On30 engines. Three are offered for the Porters, and this one, an all-weather cab for the Porter 0-4-2, appears to be fairly representative of the design and construction pattern for most. They're all good low-budget, high-satisfaction projects for recessionary times.

The Prototype

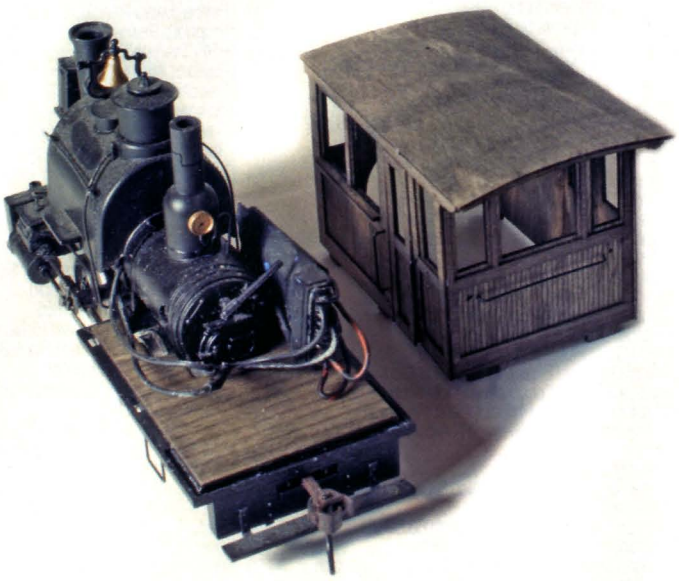
Bill Banta's response to an e-mail about a prototype indicated the kit was patterned after another model, not a prototype. I Googled "Porter locomotive pictures," but could not find a prototype for this cab after reviewing the 937 most relevant hits.

The Kit

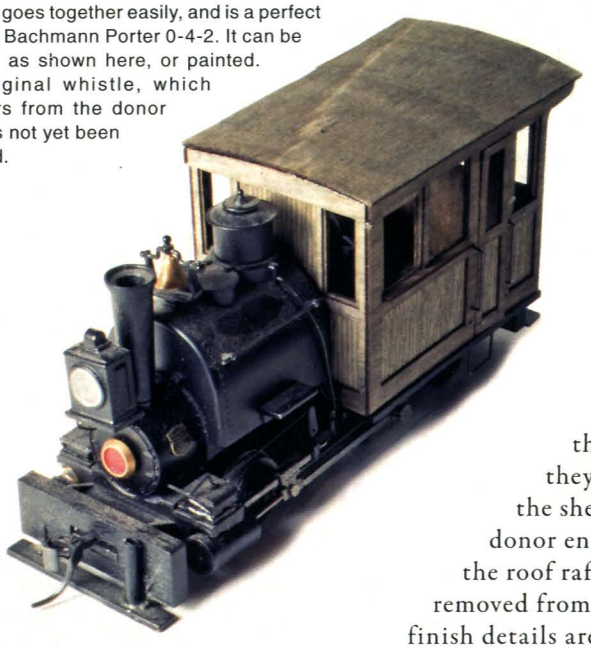
The Porter cab conversion kit comes packaged in a plastic envelope stapled in a blue cardboard overlay, and includes two laser-cut plywood panels, a separate laser-cut floor (my kit had two of them), the roof panel, the window material, and a two-sided, illustrated sheet of instruc-



The cab is composed of front, back, and side pieces glued at their common edges, at the top frame members, which fit into slots in the sides (one shown out of the slot here). Also shown already applied are the peel and stick overlay trim pieces, and the metal grabs, which are transferred from the original donor cab.



The assembled cab, now with roof mounted, has tabs which fit into slots on the base plate of the locomotive, after the floor is mounted.



The cab goes together easily, and is a perfect fit in the Bachmann Porter 0-4-2. It can be stained, as shown here, or painted. The original whistle, which transfers from the donor cab, has not yet been installed.

tions. How I love this kind of packaging, as opposed to the blister packs so common today.

One of the plywood sheets contains the basic construction parts, and the other, a thinner peel-and-stick sheet, is for the trim overlays.

Assembly

I found the instructions to be quite clear and complete, with tips on preparation, glues and finish, photographs of key assembly steps and the completed model, and numbered step-by-step instructions. They also included drawings of all the parts.

The original Bachmann cab and wood box just sit in slots on the cab base, and can easily be wiggled off, and that's the only preparation of the donor engine needed. The old cab and wood box, heavily rusted and weathered, make great cast-off detail parts to place around a shop.

The basic assembly includes removing and lightly sanding the parts, gluing the wall components at the corners (be sure they're square), mounting the shell in the tabs on the donor engine and mounting the roof rafters. The unit is then removed from the engine and the finish details are applied: overlays for the four sides, the roof, and a few other trim pieces. The roof needs to be pre-curved before gluing to the walls and rafters. The instructions recommend soaking it in water for a few minutes, and then rubber-banding it to a soda can overnight. I found this worked extremely well.

Some parts from the donor engine are transferred to the new cab: the grabs and the roof-mounted whistle. Holes for the grabs have been laser-drilled on the overlays, but the grabs on my Porter were not wide enough for the pre-drilled holes, so I had to make some extra ones with the point of a T-pin, but it was not difficult.

Slot-and-tab design makes for a precisely aligned assembly, assuming you get the walls square, and I found the finished unit fit precisely into the slots on the locomotive cab base where the original cab went. The cab stays put very well with just the friction fit of the tabs and slots, but it's probably best to use a little glue on it if others will be picking it up by the cab.

I had wanted for some time to convert this little Porter to DCC and sound, so I used the opportunity presented by having the cab off to install a couple of decoders in the engine — one for motor control on one side of the boiler, and the other, on the other side, for sound, so I got a little extra out of this project. Also, the larger, more enclosed cab gives more room and cover for the DCC components, another added bonus.

Finish

As in most kits, it's a good idea to do as much finishing as possible to the unassembled parts. I applied two coats of an India ink and alcohol solution to mine while they were still in the frets, and did only minor touch-ups to the finished cab. I may still darken it some more or paint it black before applying lettering and weathering. Either way, it'll be fetching.

Summary

This is not one of those kits that have you wondering what the manufacturer means at "Step X." Everything is clear, everything is easy, and everything works out. At $16.95, it's hard to find a better way to spend your hobby dollars during these tight times.

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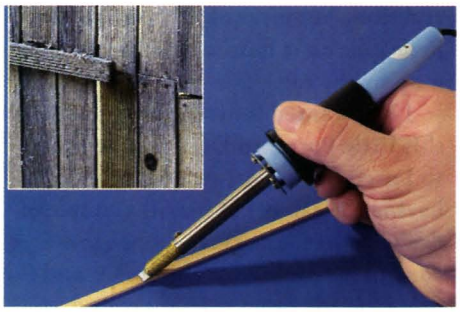

TOOL — Micro-Mark has released a Grain Enhancer Tool. It has a hot, grooved blade that quickly adds a rough, weather-worn appearance to smooth-surfaced sheetwood or strips. Simply draw the hot blade along the surface of the wood to make grain stand out. Perfect for use on model barns, sheds, piers and bridges, and other weathered structures, and rolling stock. The 30-watt iron heats to 720F to emboss grain permanently. It can be used either before or after assembly or staining. It includes five blades and instructions. The tool (#84434) retails for $22.95.

Micro-Mark, 800-225-1066; E-mail: www.micromark.com

Join rails without fussing with pliers

N, HON3 & HO — Angelo Hobbies Tools is offering a new rail joiner installation tool in three sizes that will negate the need of using pliers or fingers. The new rail tools are suitable for use on N scale, HOn3 Code 83, and HO Code 100 track.

According to Angelo Hobbies, the tool is very useful in adding rail joiners to already installed track when adding new track to an existing layout. The company states the tool's simple design eliminates damaged joiners, rail ties, and injury to hands. Simply place the rail joiner in the hole at the end of the tool and slip the joiner onto the rail web. Turn the tool around and, using the slotted end, push the rail joiner onto the rail, and mate the two rails.

The Rail Joiner Installation Tool is available for $14.95 each. A set of all three is also available for $39.95.

Angelo Hobbies Tools, 5515B Bonner, Fort Worth, TX 76148; 817-925-2355; E-mail: lesphy@angelohobbies.com; www.angelohobbies.com

Weathering Jigs keep paint off of unwanted places

HO — Minute Man Scale Models has released a Weathering Jig for freight and passenger car wheels. The jig is laser cut from clear acrylic, and is designed to hold the wheel so paint does not get on the surface of the wheel. Each jig will hold four wheels, enough to do one car. The weathering jig comes fully assembled. There are two versions available one for 33-inch wheels (#300) and one for 36-inch wheels (#301). The jigs retail for $8.25.

MinuteMan Scale Models, 18 Main Street Suite 102, Townsend, MA 01469; 978-597-2600; E-mail: info@MinuteManScaleModels.com; www.MinuteManScaleModels.com

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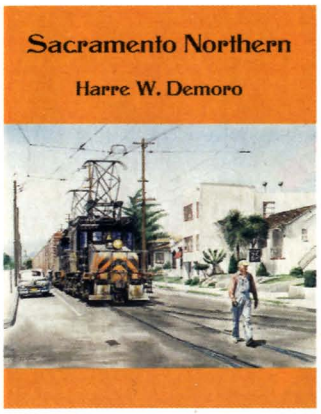

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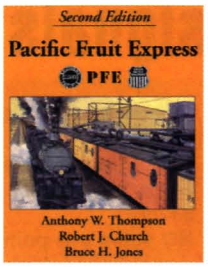

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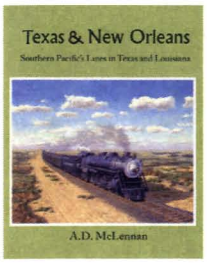

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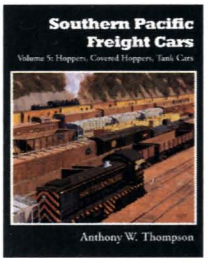

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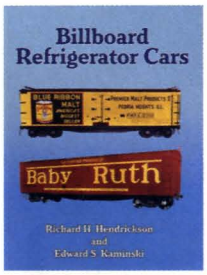

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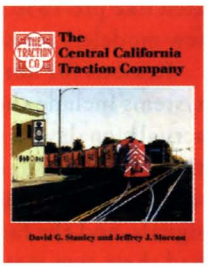

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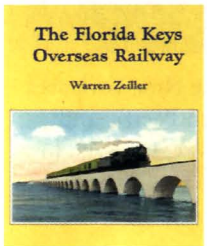

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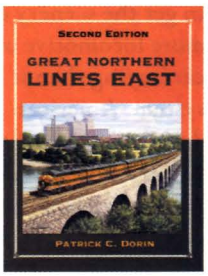

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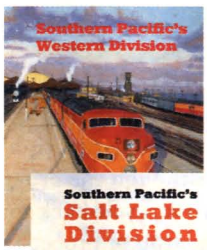

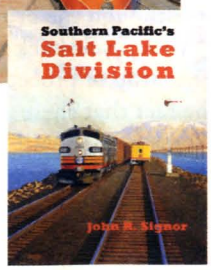

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Review and Photos by V.S. Roseman

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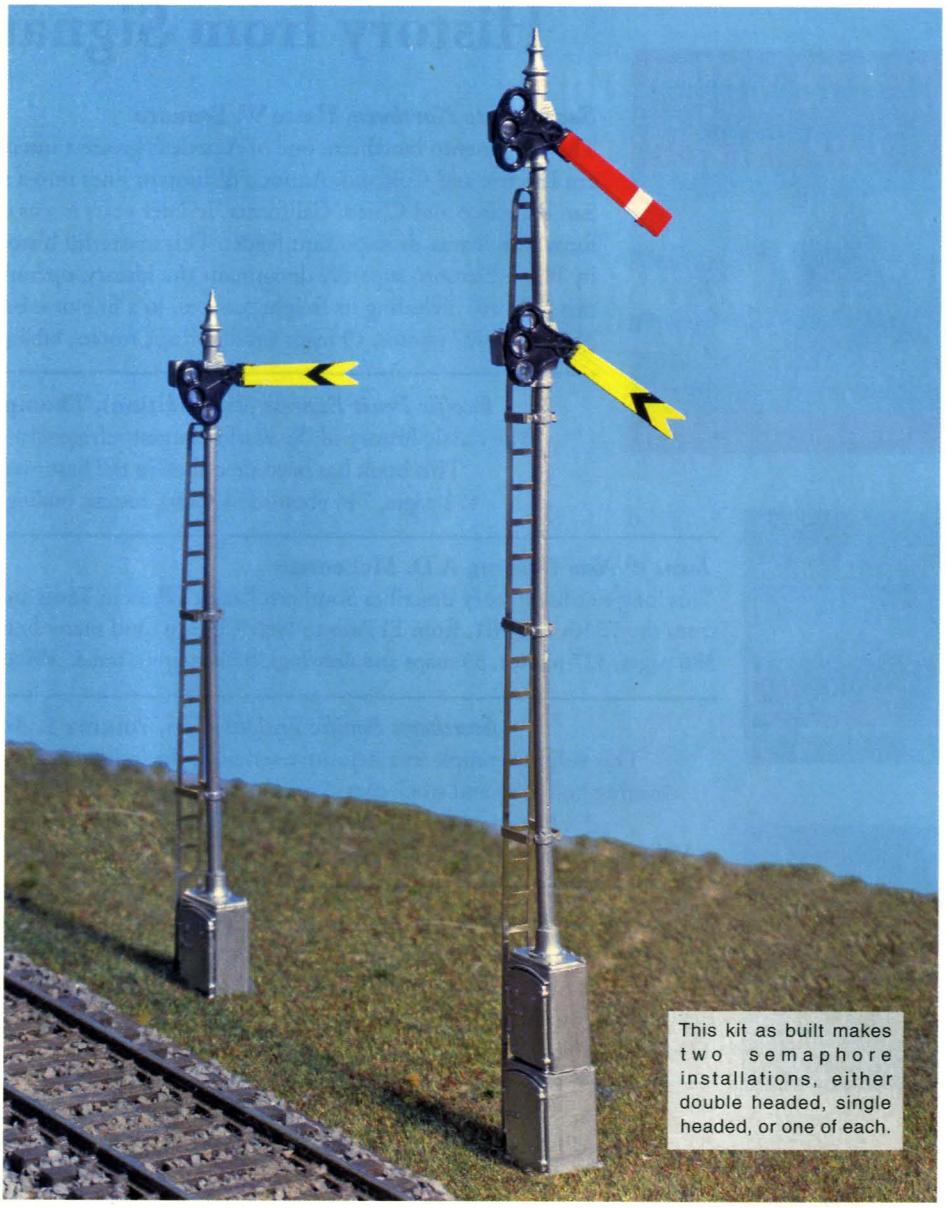


This kit as built makes two semaphore installations, either double headed, single headed, or one of each.

I RECENTLY read a book about application of railroad practice on model railroads which pointed out that most model train layouts are operated like pre-1850 prototypes because few modelers use signal systems.

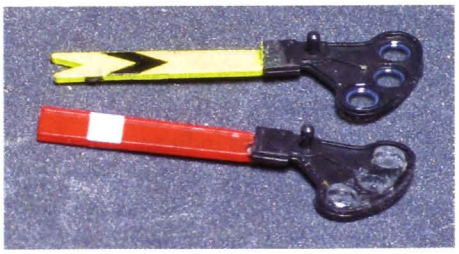
Reasons for not building signal systems include the expense of the actual signals and related electronics, the complications often encountered when wiring the signals, including DCC signals, and the fact that each railroad had their own methods of using signals. It seems that it is usually more important to get the scenery done or to buy just one more locomotive or keep up with freight car buying than it is to install a signal system. American Limited Models has designed a line of nicely made dummy signal kits that will add a nice touch of realism without the expense of automated systems or the wiring headaches that can go along with them.

These models are of the lower quadrant type. The blade at its lowest position indicates clear ahead, or through route selected. The blade at an angle is for proceed with caution, and a blade set straight across indicates either stop or that the diverging route is selected at a turnout ahead. Double heads are usually for a home and a distant signal on the same mast. Please see one of the online signal sites or books on signal practice for details about signal use for your favorite road, as there were many variations.

Lower quadrant signals were superseded by the more modern upper quadrant semaphores to provide more fail-safe communication. With the upper quadrant blade, if the rod to the blade becomes severed, it would drop to the most restrictive position of straight across, while a similar situation on a lower quadrant installation would have the blade drop to clear or proceed. Apparently these failures were sufficiently rare that it did not justify replacing all the lower quadrant signals. I saw these in operation at railroad terminals and on mainlines here in the New York area into the 1960s. Southern Pacific and other roads outside this region used lower quadrant semaphores too, although I doubt any are still in service.

Dummy signals on the model railroad

In locations such as near a rail crossing or station, a semaphore could be set permanently to the caution or stop aspect. This would fill the same function as an operating signal, although the prototype would, at some time, cycle back to a second aspect, whether stop or proceed. If you can live with the fact that these signals do not move, these models will be great for you. If you use them as block signals on your main line in a location where there will not be two trains



While the back of the blades do not show up much, substituting canopy cement from Testors or white glue will eliminate the thick clear plastic lens block as shown.

close together, you can set the blade to proceed or to caution. Even on the prototype, the signal would not move unless the leading block section was occupied. A few of these static models in strategic locations would dress up your layout considerably. You could add a maintenance truck beside the signal with a crew installing the signal along with some flaggers holding warning flags next to the track: This would explain why the blade does not move.

If you have shelves or dioramas to display your favorite models, a signal next to the track would create an interesting visual effect; it would help draw visitors eyes into the scene and create a more developed environment for your models.

The Models

These kits are made of injection molded plastic and stainless steel for the ladder section. There are enough parts to build two double-headed semaphore installations. I built my kit as a single and a double, which left an extra instrument box (great for adding at another location) and an extra signal blade, which adds to the detail around the terminal or MofW shed. Instructions are included.

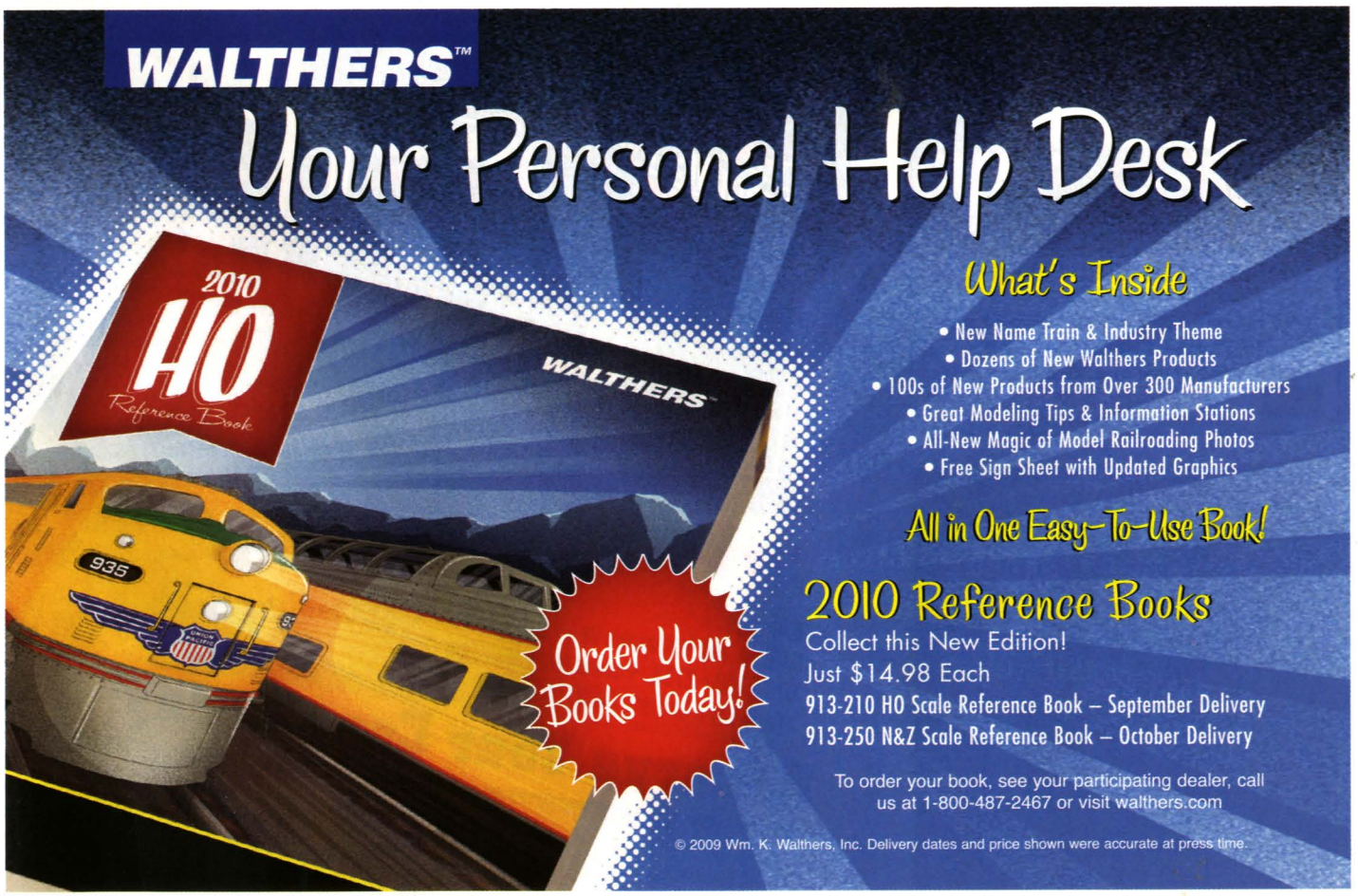
The mast pieces fit easily with styrene cement such as Pro Weld from Ambroid, and I used five-minute epoxy to add the ladder. Assembly is easy, but the ladder requires some care. There are etch marks for the two folds to be made on each of the attachment arms; I used needle-nose pliers to make these folds. Unlike brass etchings, stainless should not be re-bent or it breaks on the fold line. I suggest making the bends on one side of the ladder to 90 degrees, and bending the other side only to about 45 degrees. Attach the 90-degree side to fit the holes on the mast. Then swing in each of the other attachment arms one at a time to 90 degrees and glue in place. A third hand-type clamping device (a cast stand with two alligator clips) would help the modeler. Once assembled in this way, use either super glue (CA) or dots of five-minute epoxy applied where the ladder is inserted into the holes in the mast using a toothpick or similar instrument.

I also added a drop of epoxy to the inside of each of the assembled fold points to strengthen these and make them more rigid as the completed ladder is quite fragile and must be handled carefully. Once on the layout there should be no problem, but take care when dusting. I suggest using a small paintbrush to dust these carefully.

Another way to strengthen the model is to add a concrete foundation, which is very common on the railroads. Epoxy or super glue can mount the model onto a sheet of styrene or basswood painted gray.

The models are pre-painted in silver with full-color blades. Blades come painted red and in yellow with square ends for block interlocking home signals, and with fishtail form in yellow and white with notch or fishtail form for distant type signals.

The kit comes with nicely molded clear lenses. I replaced these by using Testors canopy cement (white glue will work, too) stretching a dot of cement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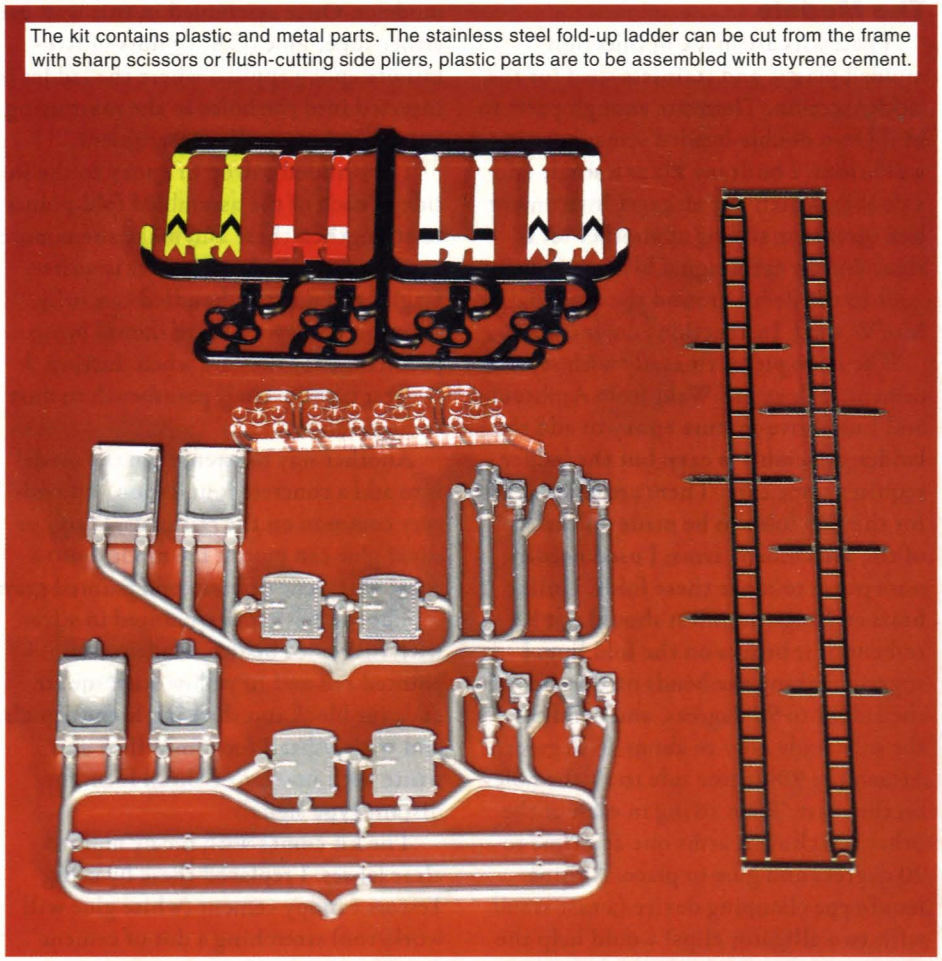

The kit contains plastic and metal parts. The stainless steel fold-up ladder can be cut from the frame with sharp scissors or flush-cutting side pliers, plastic parts are to be assembled with styrene cement.

across the lens that dries clear. While the back of the blade hardly shows, using canopy cement eliminates the clear plastic form.

The instructions indicate that the manufacturer could not find a good way to tint the lenses en masse (red, yellow, and green), but the modeler can use a clear paint such as Tamiya transparent colors intended for tinting automotive model lights. Under close inspection the colors of the lenses will show up against the sky, and this is an easy detail to add.

I sanded the slight mold parting lines on the mast and instrument boxes, touching up the paint with silver paint.

Many roads used black signal masts and these can be modeled by completing the mast assembly, painting, and then adding the blade last. The blade is to be glued in place with a thin plastic pivot and it would, in my opinion, be more trouble than it is worth to try to make these plastic models into operating ones.

Closing Thought

A few signals such as these will dress up most any layout at a reasonable cost, and should serve well until such time as you get to wire up operating signals.

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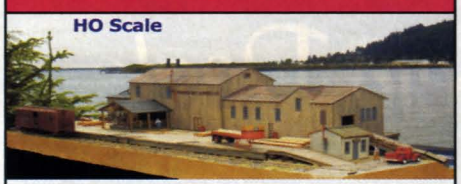
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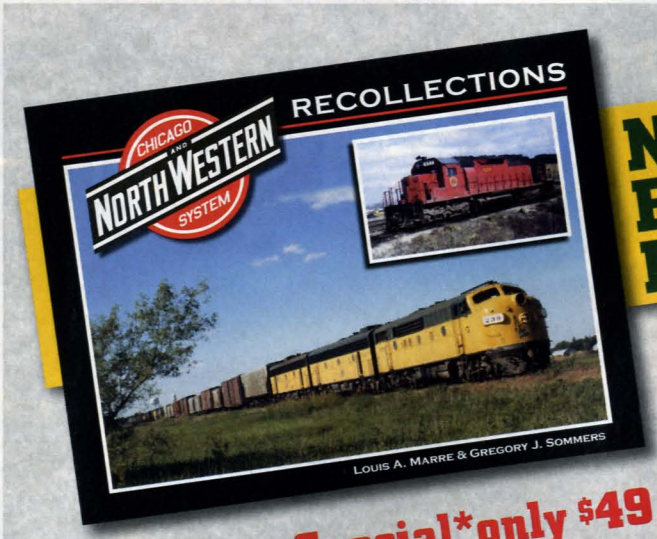

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Tolleson Grocery and Past Time Pool Hall

This kit is a result of a project to recreate the town of Wickenburg in the year 1915 for the Desert Caballeros Museum. James Bansner is creating the drawings for these structures and is working from photographs, Sanborn maps, and the actual structures — for those that are still standing.

HO — Bollinger Edgerly Scale Trains has released Tolleson Grocery and Past Time Pool Hall. This kit is modeled after the Tolleson Grocery and Past Time Pool Hall. Although altered, this structure still sits on Center Street. The kit retails for $89.95.

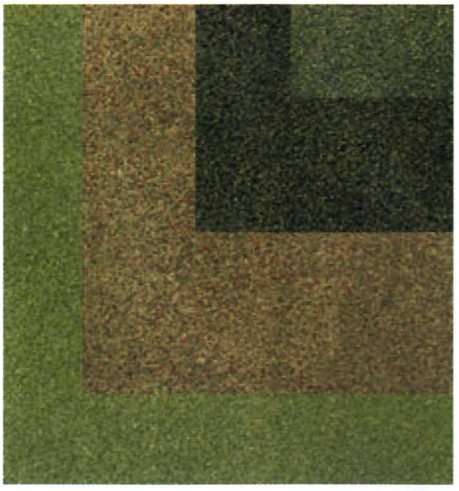
The dimensions of the kit are 3-1/2 inches long, by 7 inches wide. The kit features laser-cut wood for easy assembly; mold injected doors and windows, corrugated metal roofing, a delivery truck, several metal castings, and simple step-by-step instructions.

Henry Wickenburg and a group of miners founded the small community of Wickenburg in 1863. Wickenburg had come to the area in search of gold, and was rewarded with the discovery of Vulture Mine, where over $30 million in gold was found. Ranchers and farmers discovered the fertile flood plain of the Hassayampa River and settled in the area.

It was a rough start for the town with Indian wars, mine closures, desperados, drought, and a disastrous flood in 1890 when the Walnut Creek Dam burst. Despite these trials and tribulations, the town continued to grow and in 1895, the railroad arrived in town. The Town of Wickenburg was incorporated in 1909.

Bollinger Edgerly Scale Trains, 375 Bean Hill Rd, Belmont, NH 03220; 603-267-1818; brian@besttrains.com; www.besttrains.com

New size for ReadyGrass Mats



ALL SCALES — Woodland Scenics has released a smaller-sized ReadyGrass Mat in four colors. The 25-inch by 33-inch mat is perfect for smaller layouts, dioramas, and other projects. The rolls retail for $9.99 each.

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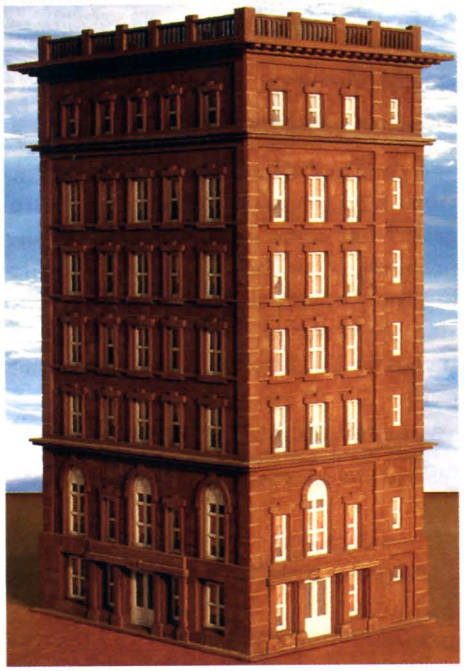
New City Buildings from Custom Model Builders

N & HO — Custom Model Builders has released two new building kits. The series of buildings features mid to large city buildings.

Custom Model Railroads, 3937 Keswick Rd., Baltimore, MD 21211; 410 889-0010; Fax: 410-243-8407; E-mail: jeff@cmrtrain.com; www.cmrtrain.com



N Scale

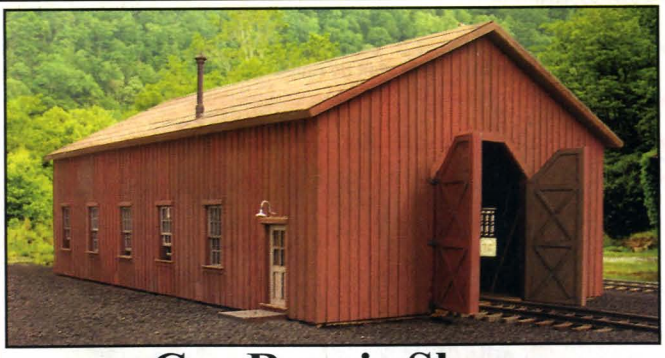
Merchants Bank & Trust Company measures 4.125 inches in depth by 3.25 inches wide by 11.25 inches high. It retails for $95.00. The eight-story add-on kit is also available for $50.00.

HO Scale

Midtown Apartments measure 6.5 inches in depth by 5 inches wide by 11.5 inches high. The kit retails for $120.00. The four-story add-on kit is available for $65.00.

The kits include laser-cut and engraved white acrylic parts with tab and slot construction. Also included are printed window shades and sidewalks. Instructions include details step-by-step construction methods, as well as painting and modeling tips.

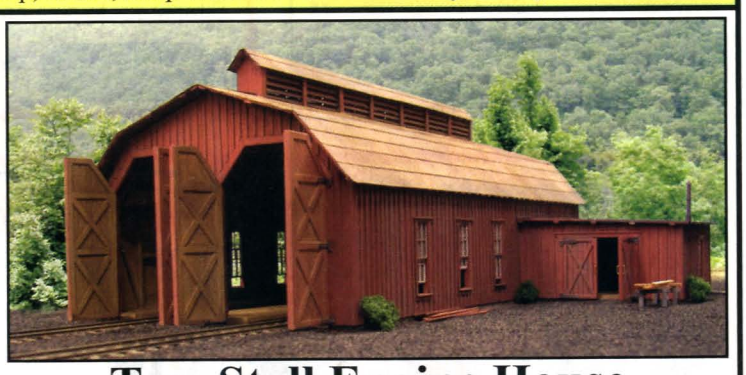
"McCabe Rail Facility" is the next component for the McCabe Lumber Company series of craftsman kits. Like the sawmill complex, the Rail Facility will be offered in individual kits so you can pick and choose what you need for your layout. Some of these kits will be offered in both **standard gauge** and **narrow gauge versions,** but most kits will work for either. In addition to the Engine Houses and Car Repair Shops, there will soon be a Water Tank, Oil Tank, Sand House & Tower, Timber Gantry, Machine Shop, Blacksmith Shop, Office, Shop Water Tank, Derelict Shay, and Speeder Shed.



Car Repair Shop

The car repair shop kit includes interior framing, flooring, positionable windows and doors, removable roof, individual battens that can be left off for a board siding, workbenches, ladders, and the usual assortment of brass & white metal details. Footprint is about a scale 37' x 62'. The HO and HOn3 versions are basically the same with the floor section width being the difference to fit the track. Both versions include a flatcar body that is being rebuilt.

#27485	HOn3	$ 79.95
#27486	HO	$ 79.95



Two-Stall Engine House

The narrow gauge version, shown above, is large enough to accept a pair of HOn3 locomotives up to a scale 64' long. The standard gauge version can store a pair of 2-6-6-2s. On the standard gauge version, the additional 42' of length is added to the back leaving the shop in the same position and it also features a run-thru stall.

It features laser-cut parts with full interior framing detail, positionable windows, flooring, removable roofs, optional battens, and a side workshop area. Workbenches, ladder, sawhorses, and brass & white metal details are included. The main building footprint on the HOn3 version is about a scale 65.5' x 32' with 20' x 19.5' workshop and the HO standard gauge version is a scale 106' x 34' with the same size shop.

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New O'Reilly Auto Parts store kit from Summit

HO — Summit USA has released the modern O'Reilly Auto Parts Store kit, a building that can be found in many towns and cities across the nation. This kit includes all building parts and signs. The parking lot base is not included, as the modeler will make it to fit his layout space. The kit (#OR-001) retails for $44.95.

The kits are milled in white styrene plastic with clear acrylic window glazing and come with injection-molded walls and roof and detailed assembly instructions with pictures. Most parts fit together but some need a few cuts along pre-molded cut lines. Some model building and painting skills are required. The size of the kit is 7-1/4 inches by 5-3/4 inches by 2-1/2 inches (185 by 145 by 65 mm).

Summit USA, LLC, 512 Ford St., Lake Charles, LA 70601; 337-436-8481; Fax: 337-436-8481; E-mail: pbl@summit-usa.net; www.summit-customcuts.com

Bodie Morgue Offers Final Services

HO — Bollinger Edgerly Scale Trains has released a kit of the Bodie, CA morgue. The kit retails for $64.95.

This kit represents the well-used structure that eventually became the morgue for the town. The kit dimensions are 2-1/2 inches long by 5-7/8 inches in width. The kit is composed of laser-cut wood for easy assembly, and includes peel and stick shingles, horse-drawn hearse with driver and casket, corrugated metal roofing, real copper flashing, and simple step-by-step instructions.

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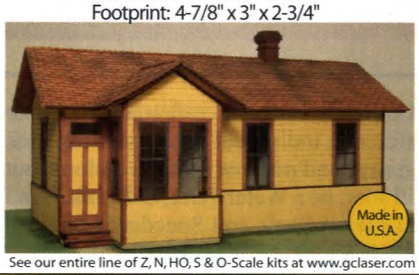

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Silver Falls Lumber Co. released by Sidetrack Laser

O — Sidetrack Laser has released a new kit, the Silver Falls Lumber Co. The kit is a freelanced saw mill design that used several Pine Country Saw Mills in Southern Oregon and Northern California as inspiration. The kit features the laser-cut building, shakes, graphics, doors, and windows. It measures 10 inches by 34 inches. The mill retails for $398.95.

Sidetrack Laser, P.O. Box 447, Newberg, OR 97132; 503-449-5361; Fax: 503-538-0599; E-mail: larry@sidetracklaser.com; www.sidetracklaser.com

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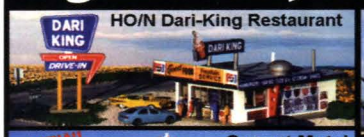

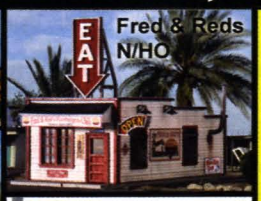

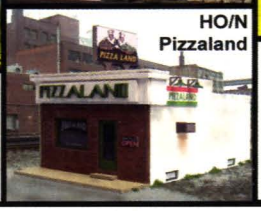

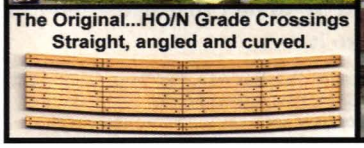

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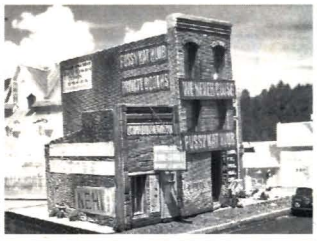

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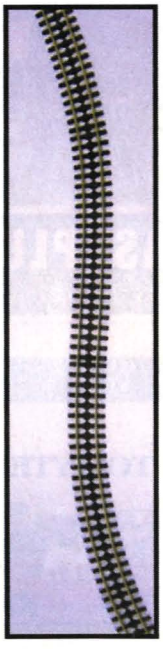
New Arbuckle, CA Southern Pacific Depot from Sidetrack

This depot was originally built by the Central Pacific in 1876-1877.

HO — Sidetrack Laser has released Arbuckle, California Southern Pacific Train Depot. The kit includes laser-cut walls, dock, window, doors, details, and shake roof. Also included is the Semaphore Train Order Signal, Fire Hose Reel, and Grandt Line Chimney. The footprint measures 11 inches by 5-1/4 inches. The depot retails for $89.98.

This depot was originally built by the Central Pacific in 1876-1877, and the rough remnants of the original building are still standing in Arbuckle today. Sidetrack Laser's version closely follows the prototype and is modeled from both current and SP photos assumed to be taken in the late 1950s. This depot is not a standard SP design that had a number assigned to it.

Sidetrack Laser, P.O. Box 447, Newberg, OR 97132; 503-449-5361; Fax: 503-538-0599; E-mail: larry@sidetracklaser.com; www.sidetracklaser.com



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ALL SCALES — Timberline Scenery has added a new color to their family of pine trees: Timberline Green. The new trees will start at $7.99 for a six-pack and go up from there to $31.98 for the 24-inch trees.

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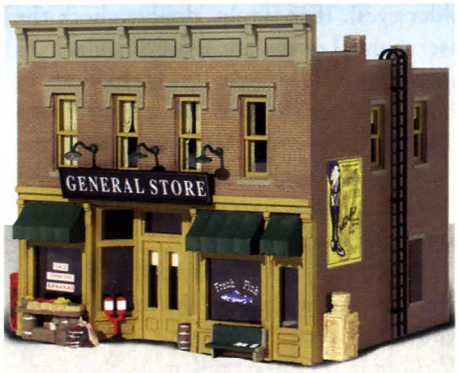
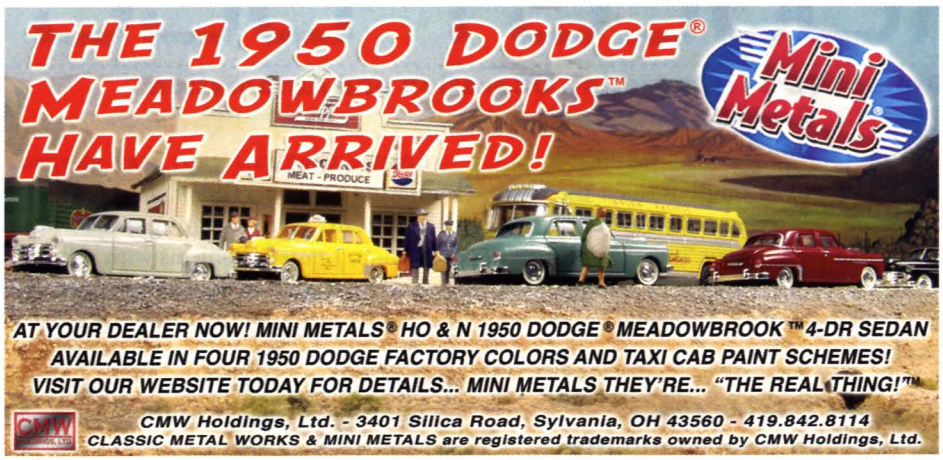
Timberline Scenery, PO Box 57, Platteville, CO 80651; 970-785-0321; E-mail: jim@timberlinescenery.com; www.timberlinescenery.com

Lubener's General Store helps bring the community together



N — Woodland Scenics has added Lubener's General Store to their line of Built & Ready Structures. The details include awnings, bubblegum dispensers, signs, curtains, light fixtures, and more. The building is individually molded, pre-assembled, and hand painted. The store (BR4925) retails for $54.99.

Woodland Scenics, PO Box 98, Linn Creek, MO 65052-0098; 573-346-5555; Fax: 573-346-3768; E-mail: sales@woodlandscenics.com; www.woodlandscenics.com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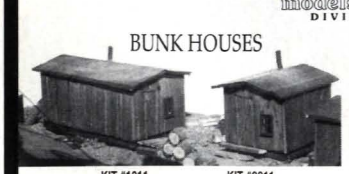

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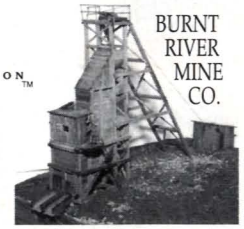

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Project DCC - Integrating Operation and Automation
Part 12, Project DCC Review

— By Phil Scandura

LAST MONTH we performed the final step in our phased approach to creating an automated DCC layout. In our final installment, we'll take a look back over the past year (and then some!) to review and emphasize key lessons learned along the way.

Lessons Learned and Suggested Improvements

Any program manager worth their salt will explain that capturing "lessons learned" at the end of a project is crucial to subsequent projects. Of course, just capturing them isn't enough; you've got to take the time to apply them next time as well. Today we'll tackle the capturing part, but it will be up to you to apply them to your current or next layout. For those manufacturers reading along, also please consider making suggested improvements in these areas to help our model railroad community.

Wiring and Power

Establish your block size and rail gapping strategy up front, making sure it is compatible with your signaling system. For example, some signaling products, such as Lenz, specify the direction of train travel and the specific rail to be gapped. Failure to follow the specifications will prevent your signals from working. Once established, be consistent throughout the layout construction phase.

Ensure that rail gaps stay gapped. Insulating rail joiners don't always prevent the railheads from touching due to heat expansion. I noted problems with some of the Kato insulated joiners in this regard. As the temperature in the house increased during the summer, the rails expanded enough to defeat the insulated joiner. The fix in this case (short of pulling up track and replacing joiners) was to cut a second gap in the rail beyond the insulated gap, slide the rails together and solder the new gap closed. This provided enough expansion space to prevent the insulated gap from closing up. Alternate techniques instead of using insulated rail joiners is to create your own insulated gap with a thickness of styrene glued in between the rail ends, sanded to match the contour of the rail.

As you plan and wire your layout, LABEL EVERYTHING and maintain accurate records and schematics. This is absolutely the best tool you can have when troubleshooting wiring problems.

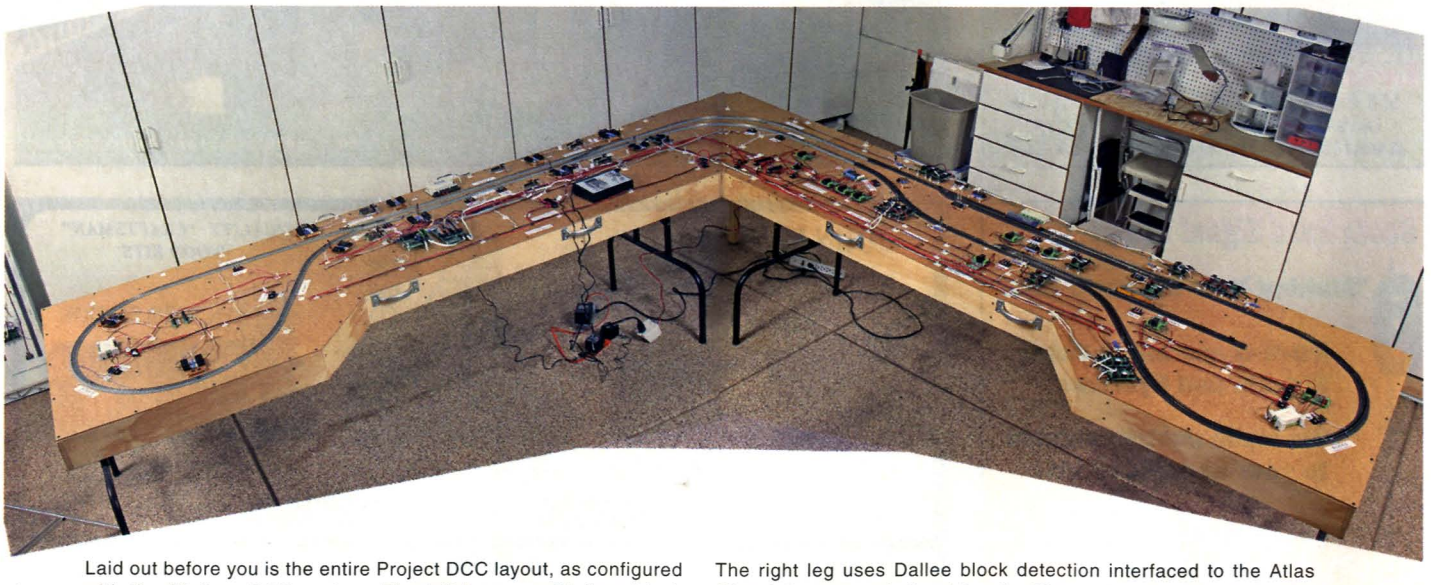
Be sure to use adequate wire gauge for DCC power busses and track feeders. Refer to the recommendations from your DCC System manufacturer.

When connecting DCC devices (such as accessory modules) to the DCC power bus, be sure to observe the correct polarity. Depending upon the DCC system, the markings could be +/-, P/N, or Rail A/Rail B. As I discovered, not all devices are well marked (especially for those of us with older eyes). If in doubt, double check the user manual or use a magnifying glass. As an example, ZIMO devices include +/- or P/N markings that are silk-screened onto the circuit boards. Unfortunately, the markings are very small and hard to read. More than once I accidentally connected something backwards.

As skillfully communicated by director Ron Howard, we learned during the movie Apollo 13 that "...power is everything. Without it, they don't talk to us, they don't correct their trajectory, they don't turn the heatshield around. We gotta turn everything off. Now." While Project DCC isn't a spacecraft, the same principle applies. Many of the DCC accessories used for Project DCC require a separate power supply, while others can be connected to track power. In the case of the latter you must be careful not to connect too many accessories to track power, otherwise you won't have enough power for your locomotives. Whenever possible use a separate power supply, as recommended by the DCC manufacturer. Over the years I've accumulated various "wall-wart" transformers, many of which came in handy during Project DCC.

Block Detection

The detectors used by Project DCC are of the load-sensing type, implemented in



Laid out before you is the entire Project DCC layout, as configured with the Digitrax DCC system. The left leg uses Digitrax block detection and signal decoder products, while the signal heads are from NJ International. The track is Kato UNITRACK sectional track. The right leg uses Dallee block detection interfaced to the Atlas Signal System and signal heads. The track is a mixture of Atlas sectional and flex track. Nearly all electrical wiring is shown "above layout" for instructional purposes (a bit is still underneath).

two different ways. Digitrax, Lenz, and ZIMO detectors are in series with the power feeders to each block, i.e., track power must first pass through the detector circuit before connecting to the track. The Dallee TRAK-DT detectors, on the other hand, required that the track power feeder pass through a coil on the detector board, relying on changes in the coil's magnetic field which represent an occupied block. Due to N-scale's small size, some locomotive/decoder combinations did not draw enough current when sitting idle on the rails to trigger the TRAK-DT detectors. By turning on the loco headlight the detector would trigger. To increase the sensitivity of the TRAK-DT, it was suggested to wrap extra passes of wire through the sensor (thereby increasing the magnetic field). Dallee advised that future versions of the TRAK-DT will include adjustable sensitivity.

Turnout Control

The Lenz LS150 turnout controller includes overload protection on each output. If excessive current is detected when throwing a turnout, the LS150 will disable the offending output. Once the source of the overload has been corrected, you must remove power from the LS150 to reset it. On more than one occasion the Atlas solenoid-driven turnouts on the left leg of the layout stopped working. After some debugging, it was determined that a loose switch machine wire was causing a short on one turnout, but nothing seemed to be wrong with the others. After fixing the loose wire, the LS150 would occasionally still shut down the turnouts. This tended to occur under computer control when back-to-back turnout commands were sent by the DCC system to the LS150. Without any delay between the commands the LS150 activated multiple turnouts nearly simultaneously triggering the overload protection. The eventual fix was to increase the delay between turnout commands.

Accessory Mounting

The various DCC accessories (e.g., turnout decoders, signal controllers, block detectors, etc.) include mounting holes so they can be screwed down to the layout or control panel. In general, many use standard screw sizes (such as #6 or #8), and some include mounting stand-offs. For some reason, however, the various Digitrax devices seemed to use different sized mounting holes, none of which were standard. I found the need to enlarge the holes (using a reamer when no circuit board traces were nearby) or scrounging through my parts box for small enough mounting screws.

Layout Control Software

If you plan to incorporate layout control software with your DCC layout be sure to investigate the details of the specific package you have in mind BEFORE beginning layout construction. Find out if it is really compatible with your DCC system; not all packages support all systems. Find out if it provides all of the features you plan to use. Find out if it assumes or requires a particular wiring configuration; some packages make very specific assumptions about wiring. Finally, find out if you can obtain an evaluation copy of the software, or at least a full copy of the user documentation. Perhaps the most challenging part of Project DCC was discovering that the layout wiring didn't match the layout software assumptions and having to develop workarounds to get things working.

Don't assume that a layout that "works fine" under manual control will also work under computer control. The hidden gremlin here is typically in the addressing of DCC accessories. As with locomotive decoders, DCC accessories come from the factory set to a default address. If you don't change it, chances are you'll experience conflicts when two (or more) devices occupy the same address. Read the user manuals for the various devices carefully before changing addresses, as doing so may have far-reaching implications. For example, a conflict was discovered between the Digitrax S8EC signal board and another DCC accessory decoder. My first thought was to change the S8EC address until I learned that doing so causes all of the control and status addresses to be offset accordingly. Since the layout control software had already been configured, changing the S8EC address would have required updating everything in the layout control software. In this case it was better to change the address of the conflicting DCC accessory instead.

Favorite Picks

It was never the intention of Project DCC to perform a product ranking, rather only to demonstrate their use in the creation of an automated layout. Still, after spending more than a year working with the various products, I have developed my favorites. In truth, all of the products perform the functions advertised and any of them would do a fine job on your DCC layout. The choice comes down to supported features. As I have said in the past, the "best" system is the one that provides the features you need, be it a basic or advanced system.

Track

I enjoyed the ease of assembly/disassembly using Kato track, so much so that I also use it for monthly locomotive reviews to create various test track configurations. However, since Kato offers sectional track only, the flexibility is somewhat limited, while Atlas flex track gives considerable freedom in layout design. I did notice that Kato track is noticeably "louder" than Atlas track mounted on foam roadbed. The molded plastic roadbed of the Kato track acts as a sounding box enhancing the noise of the train as it passes over, especially when crossing track joiners between sections. Perhaps it would quiet down with the addition of scenery blending the track into the surrounding area.

In summary, both Atlas and Kato track performed well in Project DCC. The choice comes down to personal preference and flexibility needs.

DCC Systems, Decoders & Accessories

Of the three DCC Systems (Digitrax, Lenz, and ZIMO), I didn't really have a favorite. All had their own pros and cons, but none that added up making one system stand out. As already discussed, this is a question of personal preference and ability. Even though the Digitrax and Lenz systems include a host of DCC features, they are fairly easy to use and have a minimal learning curve. The ZIMO system, on the other hand, provides many advanced features not available on these systems. For those interested in the advanced features, the ZIMO system may be a better choice. But with those advanced features comes a considerably longer learning curve.

My favorite among the locomotive decoders are the drop-in type. With the advances in decoder packaging, I am less inclined to perform surgery on a locomo-

tive to install a decoder. I would much rather swap out a light board and finish the conversion in a matter of minutes. In this regard both Digitrax and Train Control Systems decoders are easy to install and work well. That having been said, your choice of decoder must be the one that supports the features you need. For example, taking advantage of automatic speed influence requires a decoder with asymmetrical DCC support, such as those from Lenz and ZIMO. The downside being they offer only hard-wired decoders at this time.

When interfacing between the computer and DCC system, I favored the products that used a USB port on my computer, rather than the serial port, in particular, the LI-USB (Lenz), LocoBuffer-USB (RR-CirKits), and STP CANKey. All seemed to include sufficient command buffering to ensure no commands were lost between the computer and DCC system. The serial port MS100 (Digitrax), on the other hand, seemed to drop commands whenever things got busy. The most noticeable affect was incorrect signal aspect illumination.

Signal Electronics

The signal systems used in Project DCC fell into two categories in many respects, the first being centralized versus distributed control. Both Digitrax and ZIMO are centralized, meaning they use a centrally located controller and long cable/wire runs to each signal. Atlas and Lenz are distributed, meaning they use local controllers located near each signal, minimizing the need for long wire runs. There are pros and cons to each approach that you'll need to weigh for yourself. Centralized control tends to be less expensive, since you buy one controller board for many signals. But what you may save here you'll spend in wiring and the effort to install it. Distributed control may seem more expensive since you need a controller board for every signal, but it is much easier to wire and install in my experience.

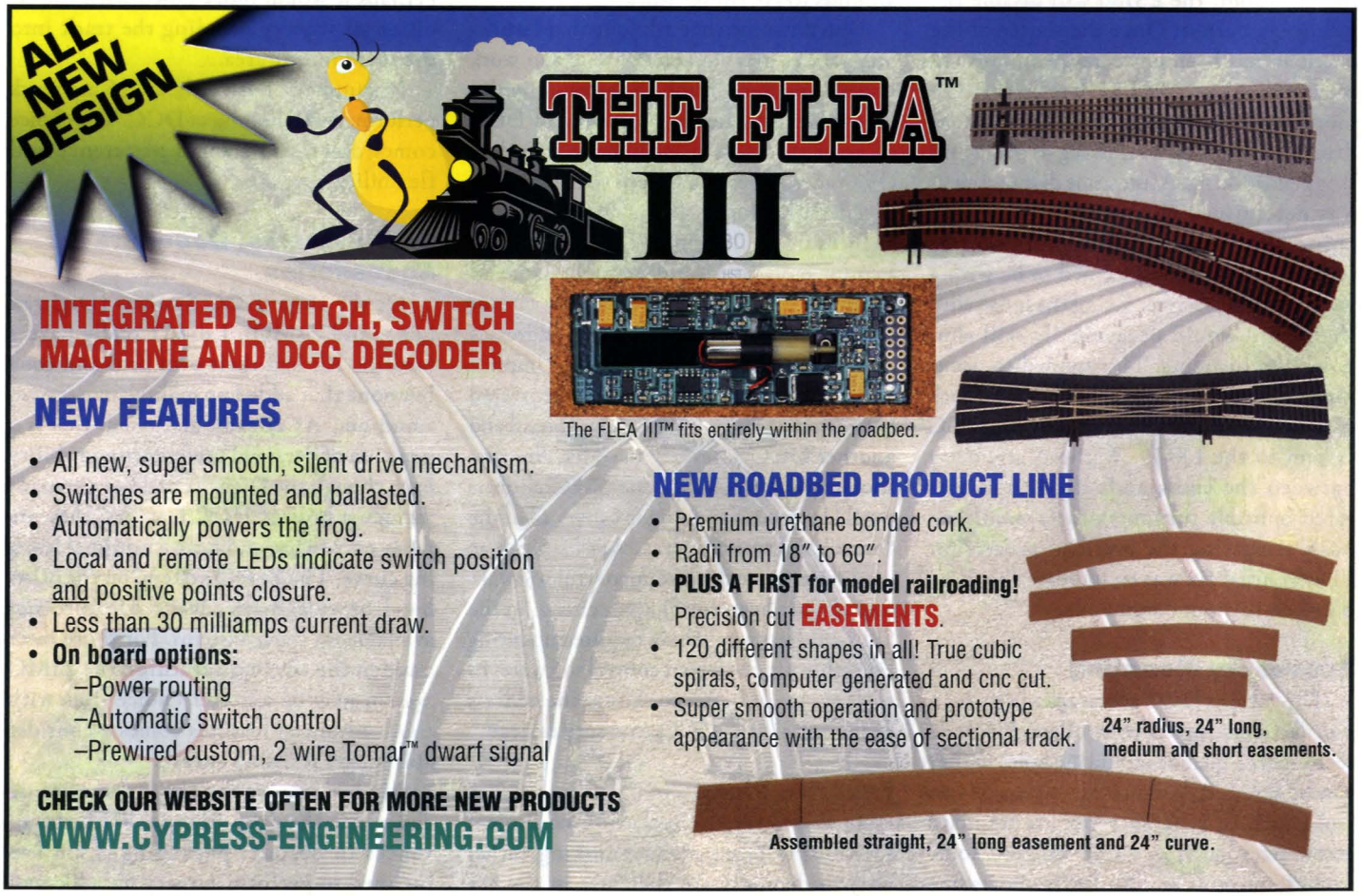
Secondly, the choice of signal system depends upon your desire to represent European or US prototype practices. Lenz and ZIMO are primarily European, in that their default design supports two aspect signals, while Atlas and Digitrax, support three aspect signals commonly found in the US. While none of these systems perfectly supports all prototype-signaling practices, I believe they are "close enough" for modeling purposes.

Finally, the choice will depend upon your need for flexibility. Atlas, Digitrax, and ZIMO all provide varying levels of customization in terms of signal operation, while Lenz is essentially a fixed system and cannot be changed.

Having said all this, I felt the Lenz signal system was the simplest and easiest to install, assuming you are satisfied with two aspect signals and unidirectional signaling (recall from Part 7A that Lenz does not support bidirectional signaling).

Signal Heads

The Atlas signal heads look good and work well with their system, although I hope to see more variety of types offered in the future (especially dwarf signals). However, for overall selection and true-to-prototype accuracy my favorites are those available from NJ International. Frankly,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if you can't find the signal you're looking for from NJ International, chances are it doesn't exist in N scale!

Locomotives

Atlas and Kato have been making quality N-scale locomotives for many years. It's hard to pick a favorite between them; it typically comes down to finding the prototype I need. Of course many of their more recent locomotive offerings are DCC-Ready (designed to fit a drop-in decoder) or in some cases, DCC-Equipped (with a factory decoder) making them easy to add to your DCC fleet. The choice is yours.

Layout Automation Software

This is the one area in which I have a strong opinion. My favorite software package without question is Train Controller from Railroad & Co. It was the easiest to use, the most flexible and the most stable. Although it still could benefit from better user documentation in certain areas, it was head and shoulders above the other packages.

A Word of Thanks

Before closing, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the DCC and N-scale vendor community, who provided numerous products and services for Project DCC. Without your continuing support, this project would not have been possible.

I'd also like to thank the staff at Paired Rail Railroad Publications (www.pairedrail.com) for their dedication and hard work transforming my sketches, drawings, and notes into the wonderful figures and tables used throughout the Project DCC series. As someone wiser than I once said, "A picture is worth a thousand words."

Finally, I extend a huge thank you to my readers for your letters of support, interesting questions, and perseverance!

In Closing

For those of you that have been following Project DCC since the beginning, I'm sure you'll agree that we've come a long way and learned a lot about DCC. No longer just for locomotive control, we've applied DCC to the control our entire layout. [For those of you joining us midway in the series, check out the *Model Railroad News* web site for information on how to order back issues. Ed]

Let's take a minute to review the original goals of Project DCC:

-To introduce modelers to the operational capabilities of DCC, beyond the individual control of locomotives;

-To provide modelers with the knowledge and confidence to implement as many operational features as they desire;

-To demonstrate the ability to create a full-featured DCC layout without the need for advanced technical skills; and

-To demonstrate systems and products from various manufacturers, exploring the ability to mix and match them on a real layout.

It is my belief that we achieved all of the goals, although I'll admit the one about not needing "advanced technical skills" was a bit touch-and-go during parts 9A, 9B, 10A, 10B, and 11 dealing with computer control. Regardless, it is my hope that you will consider implementing many of Project DCC's operational features on your current or next DCC layout. Good luck and happy railroading!

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CURVES
FOR AND ABOUT S-GAUGE MODEL RAILROADING
A column by Dick Karnes

THIS MONTH I'm departing from my usual S-scale focus to take on a subject that at one time or another puzzles almost every model railroader. Read on...

Recently, my predecessor Roy Hoffman commented to his S-Scale Yahoo e-mail mates that in his eight years writing this column, most of the material was his. I applaud him for that. Most of the material you see in my columns is and will be mine. Yes, mine, based on what I hear from all of you. Your ideas, comments, questions, and concerns help make my job as your columnist easy.

One of the things I have learned is that good ideas aren't easily internalized. For example, one of the most frequent complaints on the S-Scale Yahoo e-list concerns the centering spring in the Kadee 802/808 S-scale coupler. No matter how many times the correct solution, using a spare softer knuckle spring, is presented on the e-list (and in my March 2009 "S Curves" column), people persist in trying less reliable and/or more complex alternatives to counter the stock spring's excessive stiffness. I suppose the only path to legitimize this prescription would be Kadee's own substitution of the correct spring.

I have a modeler friend who swears he would use NMRA-standard wheels and track if he had some track-laying skill. But with today's choices of S-scale NMRA-standard trackage products, installing these products requires no more expertise than hirail-compatible trackage.

Here's Roger Russell, settling down for a relaxing reverie amidst his Sn3 Denver & Rio Grande Southern after a hard day's work. 1992 photo by Bob Werre.

Frank Titman's successive layouts have become smaller over the years as his focus evolved to industrial switching. Frank's more than 40 industries have morphed into product offerings from his Lehigh Valley Models line of craftsman kits, now marketed by Phil Kehr. 2001 photo by Dick Karnes.

But such obstacles are relatively insignificant compared to what is perhaps the most difficult thing to do: Design a model railroad that will hold your interest for many years. Successful layout design centers on just one question: What do you want your railroad to do?

This is the question I put to a new visitor to my NYW&B. He is a UP fan, busily acquiring S-scale equipment and ready to build layout benchwork. But he doesn't have a layout plan yet. He knows he wants a yard and a mountain pass. And he has a mental image of a 4-8-4 hauling tonnage. So, instead of using the layout-planning resources I lent him, he continues to temporize by acquiring more rolling stock and stockpiling a DCC system.

It's hard for many of us to actually settle on an operating scheme, which is essential to design a model railroad that will hold your interest once the trackwork is completed. Some of us love industrial switching. Others just like to run peddler freights. Still others just like to turn on the juice and watch the trains run. My friend Larry Sokol ripped out a perfectly good layout based on Altoona and the Horseshoe Curve, replacing it with three concentric ovals so he could just watch the trains run. This is all he wants, and now he's on Cloud Nine.

After a hard day at work, Roger Russell, an Sn3 modeler and scenery expert, would just go into his train room, dim the lights, start a train, sit down, close his eyes, and just listen to his sound-equipped loco make its circuit, again and again and again.

Frank Titman's three layouts were each successively smaller. The short continuous main line on his current layout is half hidden, serving primarily to delay the appearance of trains "on stage." Frank greatly prefers local switching, so he has packed his layout with over forty industries. Interchange is accomplished with several car floats. This layout allowed him to follow his bliss: creating interesting new on-line industries and replicating these as commercially available Lehigh Valley Models kits.

A commuter momentarily turns away from her burger and soda pop to watch a New Haven commuter train back into the Cornwall Bridge suburban station on the author's NYW&B. 2009 photo by Dick Karnes.

These three guys have layouts that satisfy them completely. They are indeed fortunate!

It can be hard for even a seasoned model railroader to figure out what kind of layout would satisfy him or her. I always refer people to John Armstrong's landmark *Layout Design for Realistic Operation*. I read this Kalmbach book several times before designing my previous model railroad. When my wife and I agreed to exchange rooms in our basement ten years ago, this gave me a chance to avoid the design mistakes I made and get a fresh start. I re-read Armstrong's book as well as Frank Ellison's seminal 1944 series in *Model Railroader*, "The Art of Model Railroading," and designed and built a new layout. I wanted interchanges to replenish online traffic, and I wanted to exchange peddler equipment with manifest freights that arrive, get broken up, and then reconstituted before disappearing offstage again.

My "new" layout (going on ten years old now) has the same square footage as my last one, but its main line is only a quarter of the length of the one it replaced. While it can be run as a continuous double-track loop, it's intended to be operated as an interchange operation. There are two staging yards that serve as four distinct off-site origins/destinations. There is also a float yard that serves as a fifth source/sink of freight. There are four kinds of freight operation: Main-line and branch-line trains that end or originate in my main yard/terminal complex; peddler freights that take cars from the yard, service industries, and bring cars back to the yard; transfer freights between the main yard and the float yard; and switching the carfloat. I also have passenger operation, including a terminal with a commissary, Railway Express facility, and coach yard. There is a through passenger station on the main line that also contains an MU terminal, plus two other passenger stations.

Alas, I made a new mistake: My eight staging tracks are not enough! But I make do. At age 70, there will not be another layout.

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Feel free to e-mail any comments or questions about S scale in general to scurves@modelrailroadnews.com or snail-mail them to S-Curves, Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080. Suggestions, contributions, and announcements are all welcome.

Manufacturers mentioned in this column:

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Athearn makes a major addition to its intermodal fleet

THE BIG VEHICLE news from Athearn, of course, is the upcoming Ottawa Yard Tractor due in December of this year. It will be offered decorated for CSX, BNSF, Norfolk Southern, and Union Pacific, as well as in unmarked white and yellow. Suggested retail is $24.95

I was able to see some Athearn photos of an early pre-production model and it looks very nice, indeed. The Athearn replica will feature the modern flat-roof cab, wire grab handles on driver side and back of cab, photo-etched steps and walkways, and prototypically correct rear heavy-duty suspension. It looks like it's going to be a great replica of a very common prototype.

A nice feature is the fifth wheel, which can be raised and lowered, just like the prototype. The function of this is to allow the tractor to move a trailer without having to raise or lower the trailer's landing gear. It may not sound like much, but Kalmar, the company that owns Ottawa, brags that a skilled operator can spot three trailers in the time it would take to spot one using a conventional over-the-road truck. When you're running a busy container facility that means big money saved.

This is a big-time piece of good news for intermodal fans; for the first time, they can have a ready-to-run model of one of the most popular yard tractors.

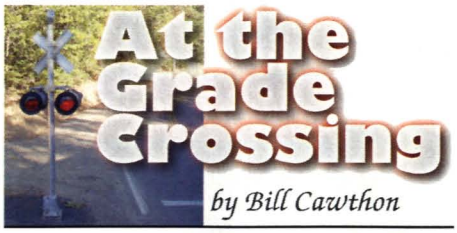
Athearn will also be making a new flatbed body for the 1964-67 F850. The next iteration of the big Ford will also have a boom, making it a super MOW rig for handling ties and equipment. From the photos, it looks like this body will be close to the correct scale width. More on that truck as we get information.

Major thanks to the 1/87 Vehicle Club for helping us with the photos of the yard tractor and F850.

An Athearn model that's available now is the Ford Model A telephone company truck. Available decorated for five of the various regional AT&T operating companies as well as the overall Bell System, these will make a perfect addition to those lonely telephone poles on a pre-WWII layout. The only thing that's missing is a ladder, but that can be added with aftermarket parts.

While it's great to see all these variations on the Model A, I can't help but wonder when we're going to see some of the same expansion of the 1955 Ford pickup. When I was a kid, the Phone Company (there was just the one where I lived) had little green trucks everywhere.

This Ottawa Yard Tractor in HO scale is one of the new models coming from Athearn late this year. Photo-etched parts and a postionable fifth wheel should make this a hit with intermodal fans. These photos of an early pre-production sample are courtesy of Athearn Trains.



Driving Stupid

The video has no soundtrack, but it is riveting, nonetheless: As the segment began, a white SUV pulled up to the grade crossing and stopped. Moments later, a black sedan raced past the SUV, trying to make the crossing before the train. As the car reached the tracks, an Amtrak train appeared and then ran out of the scene.

This wasn't a reenactment; it wasn't a computer-generated animation. Everyone who saw the video witnessed the actual moment the lives of five real people came to an end. And it happened so fast: it was just three seconds from the time the sedan entered the camera's field of view to the impact between the 530 ton train and the 3,400 pound car.

The westbound Amtrak Wolverine Express from Detroit to Chicago was traveling at about 70 miles per hour at the time of the accident. The train, carrying 170 passengers and four crewmembers, pushed the Ford Fusion sedan almost to the next grade crossing a half-mile away. There were no injuries on the train and many of the passengers weren't even aware there had been a crash.

The car, on the other hand, had been turned into a macabre, twisted sculpture barely recognizable as ever having been an automobile. By the time the crew could bring the train to a stop, the driver, a 19-year-old young man who was late for work at a grocery store, a 14-year-old girl whose mother had told her to come right home, her 17-year-old boyfriend and two brothers, ages 19 and 21, were already dead.

The collision happened between 12:09 and 12:10 PM on July 9 at the grade crossing on Hannan Road in Canton, Michigan, a charter township a little more than 20 miles west of Detroit. Investigators knew the exact time be-

The newest version of Athearn's versatile Ford Model A is the telephone truck. Athearn has released the model decorated for six Bell Companies.

The mid-1960s Ford F850 will be ready to work on your pike when it is released. It features a flatbed body and boom crane. These photos of an early pre-production sample are courtesy of Athearn Trains.

cause a surveillance camera was recording the entire scene. Three hours later, emergency crews still had not been able to pull the bodies from the wreckage and a green tarpaulin was draped over the car as if it was another corpse.

Checks of the warning lights and crossing gates showed they were functioning properly and nothing has shown any negligence on the part of the train crew. The National Transportation Safety Board may not conduct an investigation. It's cut-and-dried: the cause of the accident was a bad decision made by a driver who thought the laws of physics wouldn't apply to him.

"It's one thing when a split-second decision affects just you personally," said Sergeant Mark Gajeski of the Canton Township Police Dept. "But that one split-second decision affected not only the five people that passed away but their entire families and all the responders who had to go to that scene. So that one split-second decision affects literally hundreds of people now."

Sergeant Gajeski was one of the responders who had worked the accident and he conducted the media briefing. In his comments, he said, "I would hope that everyone who ever thought about passing a gate could see that video... That video clearly shows exactly what happens when you think you can beat a train."

Like almost all grade crossing incidents, the Canton Township collision need never have happened. Not only did the driver ignore everything he had ever been told about grade crossings, he shouldn't have even been behind the wheel: his driver's license had been suspended, again, just a day earlier. He had a history of problems driving, including multiple tickets and arrests for driving with a suspended license. Sadly, nothing got through to him until he met the *Wolverine Express*.

Perhaps a friend of the girl whose young life was cut short put it best: "My friend died being innocent because someone wanted to drive stupid."

See you next month at the grade crossing. Y'all be careful out there.

—

I do enjoy hearing from you and comments and corrections are always welcome. You can send an e-mail to: Gradecrossing@modelrailroadnews.com or snail-mail an actual letter to Grade Crossing, Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080.

Mentioned in this column:

Ottawa Yard Tractor, MSRP: $24.95 each
29100 White cab
29101 Yellow cab
29102 BNSF, white cab
29103 CSX, white cab
29104 Norfolk Southern, white cab
29105 Union Pacific, yellow cab

Ford F850 Flatbed with boom, colors and pricing TBA

Ford Model A Telephone Truck, MSRP: $12.95 each
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ATH26391 New England Bell
ATH26392 New Jersey Bell
ATH26393 Pacific Bell
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DCC and the Economy

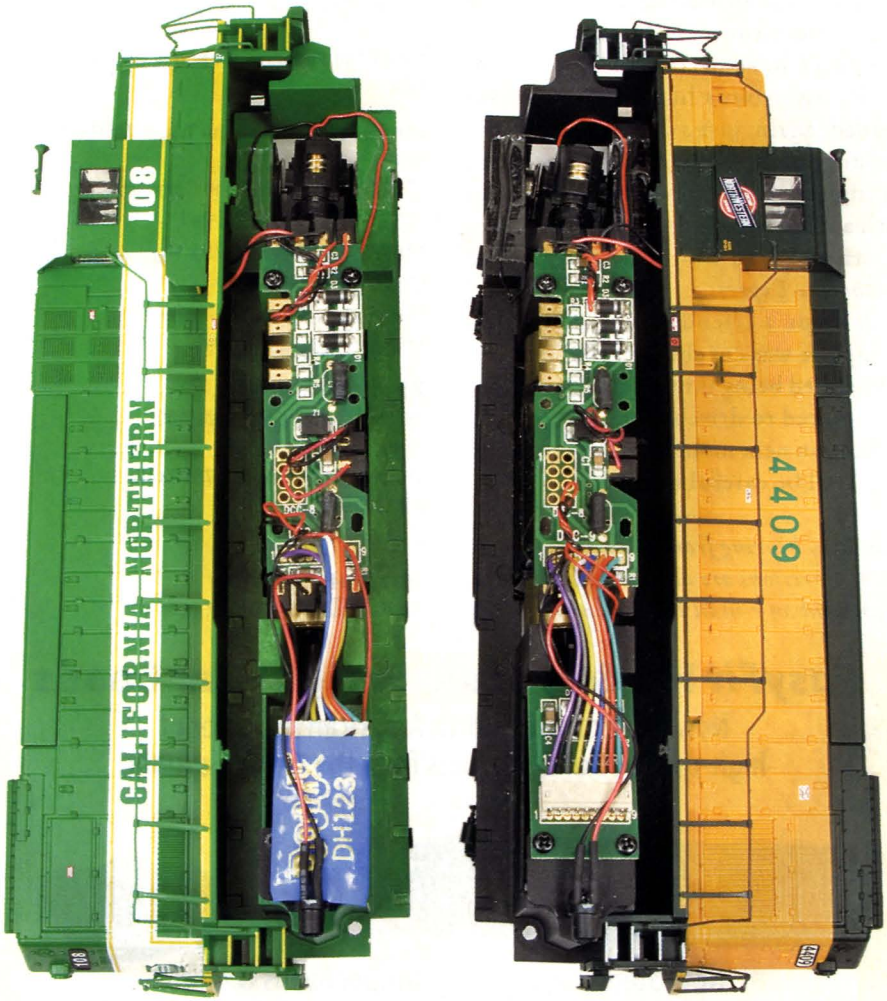
By John Sipple

I THINK we all understand what a mess the economy is in currently. A model railroad manufacturer told me recently that his business was down fifty percent. He's hanging on, but things are getting kind of crunchy in the industry right now. It's certainly no better for the individual model railroader. Momma says the toy money's dried up and the days of dragging in from the local hobby shop with a bag full of stuff are on hold until things get better.

Still, merchandise is moving, but sometimes at the lower end of the spectrum. One might think that DCC would take a big hit right now, and it has taken some, to be sure. But people are still buying new decoders and other DCC merchandise, and we have to understand how that relates to a new word in our vocabulary: "Staycation." This is a made-up word that stands for taking your vacation time from work and not going anywhere. For a family of four, two weeks at home rather than hopping planes, staying in hotels, and visiting a big-ticket destination can save several thousand bucks. Instead, that money goes to pay the bills, especially if one of the adults in the household is out of work.

But the layout is still sitting there and you can't hunt for a job around the clock. Everyone needs some recreation, a place to put one's attention and take it away from the problems with cashflow. Instead of eating out two or three times a week, we stay home and enjoy homegrown veggies and more chicken instead of steak.

What are some things that can happen around the layout to improve things there, now that you have perhaps more time to work at it? Let's look at some easy things that we can do continue to improve our layouts without digging into the hip pocket too deeply. The focus here is on DCC options.



I shot this scene originally for the review of these two GP15-1's from Walthers' Proto 1000 line. I installed a new decoder as shown, but the second loco got a used decoder from a loco I decommissioned. I simply reset it to wipe it clean of changes I might have made and it worked just like the new one. Moral: don't leave good decoders just sitting around!

1. Rewire

A spool of wire and a roll of solder are pretty cheap, as such things go. Lots of layouts were converted to DCC by changing the system that was connected from the old power controller to the new DCC system. At the time, the thought was to preserve it as it was, in case this newfangled thingie didn't work out.

It worked out and you're DCC all the way now. Dick Karnes devoted a two-issue guest shot in this chair to explain how he rewired his old DC layout into a more streamlined DCC wiring scheme. A lot of old wire came out and less new wire went in. The result is a leaner, meaner system that will grow much more easily.

The costs are a little in material but a lot in terms of thought, skills, and time. Interestingly enough, you might have more time now, have a desire to improve your wiring skills, and planning is very low cost while being absolutely essential. The rewards go well beyond a better running layout: they include the concentration that took you away from your problems and created feelings of accomplishment.

2. Rebuild

You can't drive very far on an Interstate highway without running into roadwork, and too many of us put off dealing with troublespots when we should set up "Men Working" signs and clear up some issues. Dick Bronson spent two sessions here in DCC Central explaining how to troubleshoot shorts in a very effective and cost-conscious manner.

But short-chasing doesn't cover the whole rebuild process. Most layouts develop problems that only seem to get worse as time goes on. Persistent dead spots, track kinks, and a host of other problems can be time-consuming to hunt down and settle, but once you do, it's almost like getting a new layout — almost for free! Free's good these days, and cheap's right behind it. To get the most

out of your DCC system, it helps if trains can get around the layout without going on the ground. Some of your switches may need jumper wires to improve their operation.

It's amazing how much stuff guys have hanging around the train room that they bought when times were more flush — but they never had time to install them. You now have more time to put in those DCC-friendly switches, the new booster district, switch decoders, and more, all stuff you might already own.

3. Organize

I hear choking in the front row, but we all know that everything goes better when there's a place for everything and everything's in its place. Tools need to be categorized and stored to make them easily and logically accessible. When cleaning off my workbench, I found a decoder tester I had been looking for over the past six months. Down the home aids aisle in the local big box store are all sorts of dandy organizers, and if that's not enough, check out the lure boxes down in the sporting goods department.

This is also a good time to use wire ties to tidy up the wiring under your layout. Thoughtfully re-organize your control components and add switchable plug strips so you have control of all those silly wallwarts. This is cheap stuff to buy and you may be able to redo your system, take out unneeded items, and not have to buy anything! Organizing also requires concentration and rewards you with a neater place and more sense of accomplishment.

4. Convert

Lots of guys I know got into group buying deals with other guys in the club and have a handful of decoders they haven't installed. They also have a bunch of straight DC locomotives they'd love to run under DCC. In other cases, the locomotive style you've always wanted is available in your choice of DC/DCC/Sound for MSRP $399.95 or $249.95 as DCC-Ready. A good, silent decoder sells for $20 to $40 and the net difference stays in your pocket.

This means you'll have to learn how to remove the shell from your diesel or tender without damaging the model. The most important thing is to have patience, good light, and know where your tools are. If possible, find someone who has done it all before and ask them to show you — on your locomotive, then you do the next. Of course, some models take more work than others.

5. Blend

During the good times, you might have bought a number of dandy sound-equipped models, but as we saw above, you might have to add your own decoder, and the extra expense of sound could be more than your pocket can handle. And I'll be honest: There are times when a silent model is golden. So the idea of a blended train might appeal to you.

I've done it many times, so long as I can get two locos to run close enough to the same. My first attempt was an Athearn A-B-B-A set that had a sound A-B set and a silent A-B pair. I consisted them as sound-silent-sound-silent. Since I had first tweaked them to run about the same, the quartet leaned into its train, made a prodigious amount of noise, and I frankly didn't miss sound from the other two. Even when I shut off the sound on the sound-B, the sound-A did pretty well on its own.

Also, after reading a George Drury book on Sherman Hill, I decided to recreate a photo in the book where a USRA Heavy Mikado tied on to help a Big Boy. While both locos had sound, neither needed it for me to enjoy this lashup.

6. Claim

Ever smoke a decoder? Do you still have it? Guess what, there's a good chance that the decoder maker will either give you a new one or send you one for less than buying a new one. Why? They want to keep your business. So there's nothing underhanded about sending it in and working out your deal. Then when you get it back, check out the installation on the program track before you try the new one and smoke it, too.

By the same token, do you have a loco sitting idle because the decoder no longer works, or doesn't work right? I know what a pain it is to climb into the loco and unwire the decoder, but you might go to the trouble, since it'll be like getting another loco for free. Talk on the phone to the folks who you'll be sending the decoder to, and ask if it would help if you sent in your entire loco. It may cost more in shipping, but at least you'll get it back running.

7. Enjoy

If you already have a layout, don't be a slave to it: play with it. You may enjoy run sessions, but also just run trains for the fun of it. Try letting one go round and round while you sit back and let it get you daydreaming. Take time to appreciate the work you've already invested. It's in these pondering times that you suddenly get breakthroughs in thought about where to take your layout next.

If you don't have a layout, join a club; generally, the dues are not expensive, and you'll be able to enjoy the camaraderie and accomplishment of a team layout. You can also create a small, test layout on a pine board, maybe a 1x4 perhaps six feet in length. I know running locos and short trains back and forth on such a small layout may not be what you want, but it's what you can afford.

DCC is about enjoying your trains. Spend time considering your layout. After all, this period of difficult finances won't last forever. Think about what you really want to accomplish, even if you don't have the funds now, write this all down, and see what you can do on small money. Perhaps you can do some of it now. And keep model railroading!

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If you have questions, answers, suggestions, tips, or comments about DCC and the topic in this column, email me at: dcc@modelrailroadnews.com or send a letter to: DCC, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080

Scratchbuilding PRR Radio Antennas Without Going "Over" Budget

N-DEPTH

By Steven Goehring

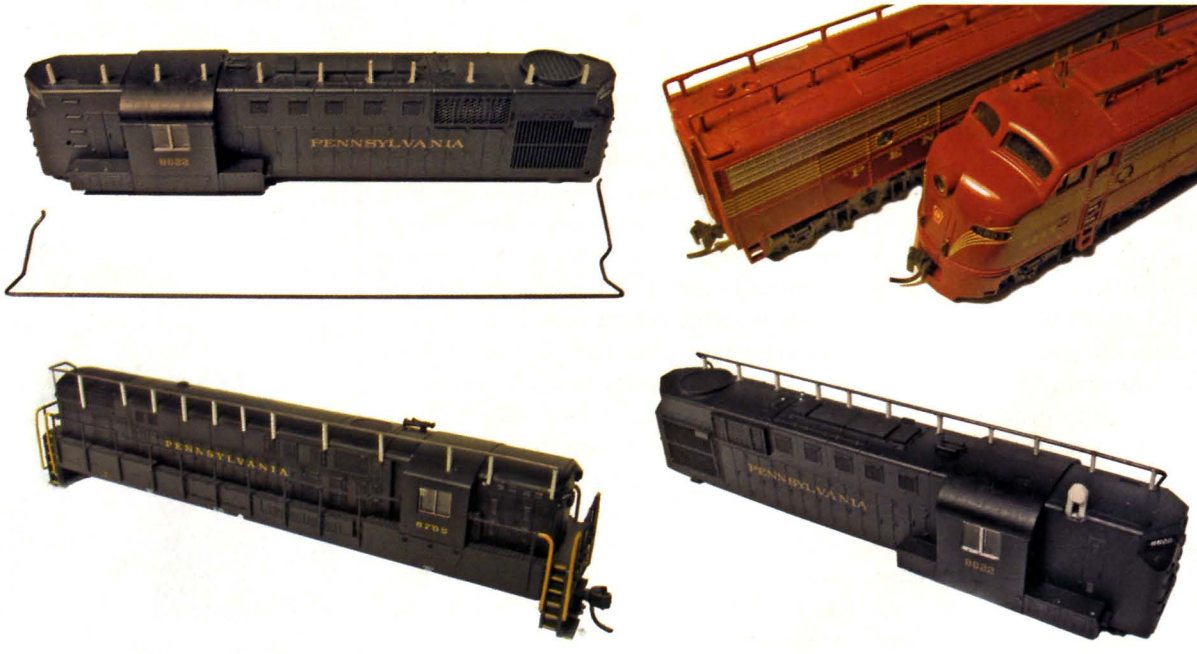
WELCOME to the second installment of N-Depth as written from various points around the Keystone State! The still-recent move gives me more than enough justification for an article of very Pennsylvanian significance: building and installing "Trainphone" induction-phone antennae, a very noticeable railroad-specific detail featured on Pennsylvania Railroad locomotives and cabin cars up to the mid-60s. I did this at first as an experimental project, with minimal regard for exactness and using only materials I already had. I was so pleased with the results that I went on to install antennae on five more models and plan to do more. While the "eyeball it and call it good enough" approach does not make for a good how-to, I will present my methods and hopefully enough information to set you on your way to having accurate communication antennae on your 1940s-1960s Pennsylvania Railroad locomotives.

Commercially produced PRR models in N scale have in almost every case lacked Trainphone antennae, although many of them should have them. Simply, the economics of mass-producing locomotives has not given rise to railroad-specific detailing until very recently, and even now, the long, delicate Trainphone antennae requires specific research, painstaking hand-installation, and a redesign in packaging. All the while it costs more to mold, paint, protect, and answer customer complaints when they inevitably break in shipping. Despite all this, Broadway Limited Imports' Precision Craft Models offshoot brought us Trainphone-equipped E7s in 2007; now they've been re-run and have E8s and PA-1s to join them. Perhaps there is hope for more accurate factory detailing on PRR models, but for now, N-scale Pennsy modelers should know how to build antennae and install them.

Trainphone On the PRR

The vibrations on board steam locomotives made the delicate radio equipment of the early Twentieth Century unsuitable for railroad use. The vast Pennsylvania Railroad, though, felt that it needed a voice communication system between trains and stationary points. They started testing a system of low-frequency electromagnetic induction communications in the 1930s, using telephone wires parallel to the tracks (or even the tracks themselves), to carry the signal over long distances. A signal routed through a rooftop antenna would induce a signal of the same wavelength in track or telephone wires. The antennae themselves were not visible; they were contained inside the handrail-like conduit bolted to the roof of a steamer's tender or a diesel locomotive. A coil, often seen as a circular "dish" on the locomotive, helped to receive the messages. Overall, the system worked much like a telephone; in fact, you could see steam locomotive engineers holding a plain black telephone handset to their ears while they called their dispatcher, rear-end crew, or another engineer! Two different channels allowed for communication between engineer and conductor and between trains and stations or towers.

Starting in 1943, the system was ready to go and this equipment was installed on tenders, on diesel locomotives' rooftops, and on cabin cars. They were not used in electrified zones due to interference from the electrical equipment. This system lasted into the early 1960s, when the PRR started to use conventional radios. With the deliveries of GP35s, U28s, and Alco Centuries, the installation of Trainphone antennae ceased, and over time, they were removed from older locomotives. Aside



This group of shots may give you some ideas for installing the Trainphone broadcaster antennae (the handrail-looking structures on the roof), as well as the receiver dishes on an RS-11 and an H-24-66 "Trainmaster." At top left is the RS-11 body with all of the supports sitting in place with their V-grooves cut in the top. The wire antenna lies below it. At top right are two E8As, showing the odd ways in which the engineer's side (right side of the engine) antenna connects to the body. At the bottom on the left the Trainmaster with its supports glued to the side in the same places that the real locomotive had its antenna supports bolted on. The RS-11's dish, shown at bottom-right, is built from styrene scrap and installed in a small cutout in the hood.

Shown here is my entire antenna-equipped fleet. Clockwise from top-left: RS-11, showing the fireman's side (when the long hood is facing forward). Note the placement of the receiver dish behind the cab. Next is the engineer's side of an E8A, with one extra antenna support ahead of the steam generator exhaust. Below that is the engineer's side of the RS-11, where the railing begins and ends on the side of each hood. At bottom right is the PA-1, the easiest Trainphone conversion ever, requiring just 16 supports and two identical L-shaped wires. To the left is the H-24-66, with its antenna supports bolted to the side, which makes for an easy installation. Finally, above that is the fireman's side of an E8A.

from the PRR, the Kansas City Southern and Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range also used Trainphone to some extent.

Installing Your Own Trainphones

I first decided to install rooftop antennae on my E8 models. They already featured sound decoders, so considering they were a cut above my existing fleet just from that, I decided to elevate them even further. But I chose to do so with the materials on hand, not with commercial parts. (Gold Medal Models part no. 16033 is a set of brass antenna supports often used by PRR modelers). The pictures of the results of using the GMM antenna supports look good, and you can use thin wire (such as piano wire) for an easy and accurate finishing touch. But I wanted to use materials on hand, so I picked up some thin wire and small styrene strips and got to work.

The key to a good-looking antenna is to get your wire bent to the right shape. In most cases, the wire will do most of the work of holding itself up, and will also strengthen the supports beneath it. I worked hard to get my wire measured and cut correctly, making the fireman's side (left) antenna just a simple L-shape and bending the engineer's side antenna to a more intricate, detailed appearance. Both are accurate as far as most photos I found show; some showed variations, but I chose the best path for me.

I then cut styrene strips to serve as the antenna supports. I cut them to the approximate length that looked good in photos, possibly leaving the models a little long, but overall trying to maintain a consistent height over the engine. Measuring my finished models, I seem to have put the antennae at about 1.5 scale feet from the rooftop (farther for the Trainmaster due to being mounted on the side of a sloping roof). BLI E7s also have their antennae at that height, so I suspect that is about correct. I cut each piece of strip styrene to length, then carefully cut a V-shaped depression in the top, cutting down from each corner to the center. This allowed the antenna to rest in the supports more steadily.

For the first antenna, I laid the wire in place at the height I desired and then slid the supports into their holes, raising them up to the level of the wire. I had drilled out the holes by twirling a hobby knife with a fresh blade, but a drill bit sized for your antenna supports would work just as well. I then used gap-filling ACC to hold the supports in place, preferring the quick-grabbing super glue to slower-acting plastic model cement. I lined up two end supports exactly and glued them in place, but only on the bottom. I then removed the wire antenna and made sure it was straight along the length of the rooftop. It will tend to bend, so work carefully from here if you're hoping for perfect results.

Once you have the first two supports in and the wire is straight and has its ends properly formed, lay the rest of the supports loosely in their holes. Then lay the wire in over or next to them, seating it securely on its ends and super-gluing it to the end supports that you have already secured. Now, you can pull the rest of the supports up to the wire with needle-nosed pliers or tweezers, put a dab of glue on them, and stick them on the wire, making sure they are straight and securely contacting the antenna. Repeat this process for each support then make sure your antenna is still straight. Finally, glue the bottom of the supports to the locomotive shell from the inside of the shell. You may want to do this with the locomotive upside-down to keep the antenna straight.

Equip Your Whole Fleet!

Practice makes perfect, so keep at it and add Trainphone antennae to all your models for which you can find accurate references! You needn't expect true perfection; just do what looks good to you and that's perfect enough. Your model with a home-made Trainphone antenna will look better than another model with a glaringly naked roofline. I've converted pretty much my entire fleet, and am happy with the results. Even next to BLI's factory-installed Trainphones, these look great and are cheap and easy to install, taking less than an evening for most. Remember, you can do it! Next time I write this column, I will have turned 20, so let me re-use this old line one last time... this project was so easy, a teenager could do it... six times!

—

Feel free to E-mail any comments or questions about N scale in general to: ndepth@modelrailroadnews.com. Or write to: N-Depth, c/o Model Railroad News, P.O. Box 1080, Merlin, OR 97532-1080. Suggestions, contributions, and announcements are all welcome.

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Free trial subscription cards of Model Railroad News are available upon request for show and meet attendees. Call, fax, or e-mail for details.

Events & Activities can be viewed online at www.ModelRailroadNews.com

Alabama, Dothan — The Wiregrass Heritage Chapter, National Railway Historical Society will be having a train Show on Sept. 19-20th at the National Peanut Festival Fairgrounds, 2256 US Hwy 231 South. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include a 25,000 square foot building filled with 150 tables of new and old model equipment and supplies, large operating layouts in several scales, an outdoor train ride for kids, door prizes, and concessions. Admission: $5.00, adults; children under 12 with an adult admitted free. For more information contact: Danny Lewis, 491 Ashley Circle, Dothan, AL 36305; (334) 790-6284; e-mail: dannylws@yahoo.com

California, Antioch — The Black Diamond Lines will be hosting their Fall Show on October 24-25, and on October 31-November 1st, at the Antioch Model Railroad Club, 425 Fulton Shipyard Road. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Attractions to include the BDL 1,500 square foot HO layout featuring rural and urban scenery. For more information, call: (925) 779-1964; or visit: www.blackdiamondlines.org

California, Riverside — The Roundhouse Gang Model Railroad Club will be holding a Swap Meet on October 17th, at the Janet Groeske Senior Center, 5257 Sierra Street (1 block north of Sears). Hours will be from 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Admission: $3.00; spouse and children under 18 admitted free. For more information, contact: Gary, (909) 794 3153; e-mail: gwintererst@verizon.net

Colorado, Colorado Springs — The Slim Rail Model Railroad Club will be having their Annual Model Railroad Show and Swap Meet on October 17th, at Rampart High School, 8250 Lexington Drive. Hours will be from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include large operating layouts, collectibles, clinics, and swap tables. Admission: $4.00, adults; children with adult admitted free; $6.00, family. For more information, contact: John Campbell, 18510 Augusta Dr., Monument, CO 80132; (719) 481-2698; e-mail: johnfn3@msn.com

Colorado, Lakewood — The Foothills Society of Model Railroaders' Model Railroad and Toy Train Swap Meet will be held on September 19th, at Christ on the Mountain Church, 13922 W. Utah Avenue. Meet hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Admission: $3.00, adults; $1.50, over 64 or under 12. For more information, call George, (303) 989-0087; or Eric, (303) 985-1491.

Connecticut, Orange — The New Haven and Derby Model Railroad Club's 17th Annual Model Train Show will be held on October 11th, at the High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Road (Route 152). Hours will be from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Admission by Donation: $5.00, adults; $1.00, 12-18 w/ adult; under 12 admitted free. Site is handicap accessible. For more information, contact: Don Robillard, 74 Colonial Blvd., West Haven, CT 06516; (203) 932-0185; www.newhaven-derbymodelrailroadclub.org

Connecticut, Waterbury — Classic Shows, LLC will be holding a Train and Toy Show on October 25th, at the Holiday Inn, 3580 East Main Street. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Admission: $5.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free with adult. For more information, call (203) 926-1327; or visit www.ClassicShowsLLC.com

Florida, Bradenton — RealRail (formerly the Sarasota Model Railroad Club) will be open on September 5th, at RealRail Rail Center, 6804 W. 14th Street # 6806. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating exhibits and displays in O Scale, HO Scale, and N Scale. Admission: $2.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free when accompanied by an adult. For more information, call: Steven Haber, (941) 321-5847; or e-mail: Steven.Haber@realrail.org

Florida, Englewood — Regal Railways will be having a Train Show on October 24th, at 401 N. Indiana Avenue. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Attractions to include vendors and a small layout. Admission: $4.00, adults; children under 13 admitted free. For more information, call Joe Schramm, (727) 244-1341; or visit: www.regalrailways.com

Florida, Homosassa — Regal Railways will be holding a Train Show on October 31st, at the Lions Club, 3705 S. Indiana Terrace. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include a layout, and vendors. Admission: $4.00, adults; children under 13 admitted free. For more information, call: Joe, (727) 244-1341; or visit: www.regalrailways.com

Florida, Largo — Suncoast Model Railroad Club's Train Show will be held September 19-20th, at 6340 126th Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Attractions to include large model train and railroadiana show with over 100 tables. Admission: $5.00, adults 18 and older; $1.00, children 12 to 17; children 11 and younger admitted free. Club Open House with operating HO- and N-Scale layouts will be held at 12355 62nd Street North, Suite A, (across the street from the show). Admission is free for the Open House. For more information, visit: www.suncoastmrrc.com

Florida, Pinellas Park — H&R Trains will be holding their 57th Train Show on October 2-4, at H&R Trains, 6901 U.S. Hwy. 19 N. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include exhibits of every scale, "how-to" classes, as well as seminars on model railroad topics and demonstrations of new products. Admission is free. For more information, contact: David Beiter or Alice Morris, H&R Trains, 6901 U.S. Hwy. N, Pinellas Park, FL 33781, (727) 526-4682; fax (727) 526-3439; e-mail: hrtrains@hrtrains.com; www.hrtrains.com

Florida, Spring Hill — Regal Railways will be holding a Train Show on September 26th, at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 10470 Spring Hill Drive. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include a layout, and vendors. Admission: $4.00, adults; children under 13 admitted free. For more information, call: Joe, (727) 244-1341; or visit: www.regalrailways.com

Idaho, Caldwell — The 2nd Annual Treasure Valley Train Expo will be held September 11-13th, at the O'Connor Field House, 2207 E. Blaine Street. Show hours will be from 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include modular layouts, vender tables, modeling contests, clinics, and Operation Lifesaver. Admission: $5.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact Troy Dewey, c/o Team Dewey Toys & Hobbies, Karcher Mall, 1509 Caldwell Blvd. Ste. 19, Nampa, ID 83651; (208) 461-5028; www.treasurevalleytrainexpo.com

Idaho, Idaho Falls — The Eagle Rock Railroad Historical Society will be sponsoring Railshow 2009 on October 10-11th, at the Idaho Falls Recreation Center, 520 Memorial Drive. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission: $3.00, adults; children 10 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: EERRHS, P.O. Box 2685, Idaho Falls, ID 83403; www.ida.net/org/errhsi/theframes.html; or Dave Shaw, 237 E 15th St., Idaho Falls, ID 83401; (208) 522-3125.

Illinois, Decatur — The Decatur Fall 2009 Train Fair will be held September 19-20th, at the Decatur Civic Center, 1 Gary K. Anderson Plaza, located on the corner of Eldorado and Franklin Streets. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include everything trains: all gauges on display and for sale, books, and memorabilia. Refreshments will be available. Admission: $4.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Steven Bricker, (217) 864-4397 or (217) 454-2528; e-mail: sabricker@comcast.net

Illinois, Galena — The Rock Island Technical Society will be having a Swap Meet on September 26th, at the Chestnut Mountain Resort, 8700 West Chestnut Road. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $5.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Rock Island Technical Society, 18933 A Street, Savanna, IL 61074; call Jack Carson, (815) 273-4013, e-mail: rits1@hotmail.com; www.RITS.org. For directions to Chestnut Mountain Resort, visit: www.chestnutmtn.com

Illinois, Oak Lawn — The 7th Annual Southland Model Railroad Show will be held September 19-20th, at H. L. Richards High School, 10601 South Central Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Attractions to include over 18 operating layouts from N Scale to G Scale, safety activities including the "Smoke House," Operation Lifesaver, and fingerprinting. There will also be door prizes, raffles, and concessions. Admission: $6.00, adults; $5.00, seniors 65 or older; children under 12 admitted free. Parking is free. Show is a fundraiser for the music department at Richards High School. All proceeds to be used to offset travel expenses for the various music ensembles. For more information, contact: Joe Bandemer, (708) 423-1054; e-mail: joebandemer@sbcglobal.net

Illinois, Oak Park — The Oak Park Society of Model Engineers is seeking new members to build and operate their HO Oak River Railroad through September of 2009. The Club is open Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Dole Learning Center, 251 Augusta Boulevard. For more information, call (708) 848-5716; or visit: http://aptakisic.net/opsme.htm

Indiana, Crown Point — The Crown Point Model Railroad Show & Swap Meet will be held on October 25th, at Saint Matthias Church Hall, 101 Burrell Drive. Hours will be from 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Show will feature all gauges for sale, and an operating layout. Site is wheelchair accessible. Admission: $3.00, adults; $1.00, children. For more information, call Tom, (219) 663-4480; or Bruno, (219) 663-0666.

Indiana, Danville — The Central Indiana Division NMRA will be having a Train Show on October 17th, at the Hendricks County 4H Fair Grounds, 1900 East Main Street (across from the Post Office). Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating layouts from Z gauge to G gauge, with a live steam layout, many vendors with railroadiana, books, tapes, and DVDs, two modeling clinics, and a door prize. Refreshments will be available. Site is wheelchair accessible. Admission is free. For more information, contact: John Pancini, (317) 272-3796; e-mail: jpancini@indy.rr.com; or David Clendenin, (317) 272-4690; e-mail: bigfourjct@aol.com

Indiana, Fort Wayne — The NMRA North Central Region Convention will be held October 15th-18th, at the Fort Wayne Marriott, 305 E. Washington Center Road. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Attractions to include model railroad clinics, prototype tours, layout tours, and operating sessions. Admission: $35.00, NMRA members; $45.00, non-NMRA members. For more information, contact: Dick Moessner, 13820 Messenger Bay, Fort Wayne, IN 46845; www.hoosierdiv3nmra.org

Indiana, Fort Wayne — The Maumee Valley Railroad Club will be having a Model Railroad Show & Swap on October 31st, at Coliseum Bingo, 911 W. Washington Center Road. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Attractions to include operating layouts, a hands on trains display (for kids of all ages), and a play area. Refreshments will be available; parking is free, and site is handicap accessible. Admission: $3.00, adults; $5.00, families; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Chuck White, 903 W. Main St. #9, Van Wert, OH 45891; (260) 760-1666; e-mail: Railcarman@verizon.net

Iowa, Spirit Lake — The Prairie Lakes Division of the NMRA will be having their Fall Meet on October 17th, at the Spirit Lake Expo Building. Hours will be from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to contests, a raffle, vender tables, clinics, the club module layout, business meeting, and layout tours. Admission: $3.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free. For more information, contact Ronald Peterson, PR Director, (712) 225-4780; e-mail: ron31545@yahoo.com; or Doug Harding, Supt., (712) 754-3303; e-mail: dougharding@iowacentralrr.org

Maryland, Sharpsburg — The Hagerstown Model Railroad Museum will be hosting a Trainfest on September 12th, at the Washington County Ag. Center, 7313 Sharpsburg Pike (6.5 miles south of I-70 on Rt. 65). Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $4.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. Proceeds to continue the restoration of the historic Antietam Station located at 17230 Shepherdstown Pike, in Sharpsburg. For more information, call: (301) 824-2239; e-mail: Hmrrm@myactv.net; or visit: www.hmmrm.org

Massachusetts, Hingham — The South Shore Railway Club will be holding their Fall Open House and Show on October 24-25th, at the Bare Cove Park Building 51, 19 Fort Hill Street. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include a white elephant table, rail movies, a raffle, and club cars for sale. For more information, contact: SSMRC, P.O. Box 170, Hingham, MA 02043-1070; (781) 740-2000; e-mail: ssmrc@verizon.net; www.ssmrc.org

Massachusetts, Taunton — The Old Colony Model Railroad Club Show will be held on September 27th, at Taunton Holiday Day Inn, located on Myles Standish Blvd., Rt. 495 Exit 9. Hours will be from 10:0 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Admission: $4.00, adults; children under 12 and Scouts in uniform admitted free. For more information, contact: Dennis Ingalls, 220 Dean St., Norton, MA 02766; (508) 285-3963; e-mail: dingalls@comcast.net

Massachusetts, Wakefield — The North Shore Model Railroad Club will be having a Show on October 17th, at the American Civic Center, 465 Main Street, and an Open House on October 17-18th, at 404 Main Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. both days. Admission: $3.00, adults; $1.00, seniors and children; children under 5 admitted free; $7.00, family max.

For more information, contact: Joe Greene, (781) 245-4742; e-mail: info@nsmrc.org

Michigan, Jackson — The 10th Michigan Railroad History Conference will be held on November 7th, at the Cascade Manor House, 1970 Kibby Road. Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m. The program will be from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Attractions to include a tour of the former Michigan Central Shops (now Miller Trucking Co.) from 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m., and an Afterglow at the former Lake Shore & Michigan Southern freight house (now Wendy's) with an informal panel discussion about Michigan railroad history. You may order off the Wendy's menu at your own expense. Registration (includes luncheon): $45.00, by October 1st; $50.00, postmarked later than October 1st. For more information, contact: MRHC, P.O. Box 852, Royal Oak, MI 48068; Greg Degowski, (248) 547-4783; e-mail: gjdegowski@yahoo.com (preferred); www.michiganrailroadhistory.org or Michigan Railroad Calendar on www.michiganrailroads.com

Michigan, Kalamazoo — The Kalamazoo Model Railroad Historical Society will be sponsoring a Kalamazoo Train Show and Sale to be held on October 25th, at the Kalamazoo County Fair Grounds, Hazel Grey Building. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Attractions to include operating layouts in all scales, free clinics, and door prizes. A Concession stand will be on site. Admission: $5.00, adults; children 10 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: John Conor, 11321 Fair Lake Drive, Delton, MI 49046; (269) 671-5011; www.kmrhs.org

Michigan, Muskegon — The Muskegon Railroad Historical Society's Annual Train Show will be held on September 20th, at the L.C. Walker Arena. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Club facilities located 1-1/2 blocks away will be open free of charge. Attractions to include O, HO, and N scale operating layouts. Additionally, Muskegon's historic Union Depot will be open for inspection across the street from the Society. Show admission: $4.00, adults; $2.00, children 10 and under. For more information, visit: www.mrhs-online.org

Minnesota, Hutchinson — The Luce Line Railroad Club will be hosting their 15th Hutchinson Model Railroad Show on September 26th, at the McLeod County Fairgrounds, 780 Century Avenue S.W. Hours will from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The show will feature a large flea market of new and used model railroad equipment, railroad books, videos, and memorabilia; a model contest, modeling clinics, door prizes, and lunch on site. Admission: $3.00, adults; children 12 and younger admitted free. For more information, contact: Terry Davis, (320) 587-7820; e-mail: ptdavis@hutchtel.net

Missouri, Kansas City —The Union Station Kansas City Model Railroad Society will be holding the Second Annual Train Fair on September 26-27, at Union Station Kansas City, 30 W. Pershing Road. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Scheduled attractions to include operating layouts, railroad historical societies, Operation Lifesaver display, model train vendors, model clinics, and more. Special events are planned for kids. For more information, contact: Union Station Kansas City Model Railroad Society, 30 W. Pershing Road, Ste. 850, Kansas City, MO 64108; (913) 393-3495 or (816) 861-3449 or visit: www.unionstation.org

Missouri, Saint Louis — The Boeing Employees' Railroad Club will be having a Railroad Swap Meet on September 12th, at the Greensfelder Recreation Complex at Queeny Park, 550 Wiedman Road. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m Admission: $3.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Wayne Schimmel, 733 Highway Y, Winfield, MO 63389; (636) 668-6313 (after 6:30 p.m. Central Time); e-mail: wwhtehrse@aol.com

New York, Grand Island — The Nickel Plate Road Historical & Technical Society will be holding their Annual Convention on October 8-11, at the Holiday Inn Resort & Conference Center on Grand Island. Hours will vary. Attractions to include a steam powered mixed train trip on the Arcade & Attica railroad on Friday; a Train Show on Saturday; a banquet on Saturday evening, and layout tours scheduled for Friday evening and on Sunday. Additional activities at various sites will be scheduled at cost. Registration fee: $30.00 plus membership fee of $35.00 if not a member, by September 8th; add $5.00 late fee if postmarked after September 8th. For more information, including registration forms, contact: Registrar Dave Allen, (716) 536-2667; e-mail: nickplate@verizon.net; or Chairman William C. Quick, (716) 653-2348; e-mail: wcqnkp661@verizon.net; or visit the Society's web site at: www.NKPHTS.org

New York, Kings Park — Regal Railways will be hosting a Train Show on October 11th, at the Knights of Columbus, 44 Church Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions to include videos playing, vendors, and a small HO layout. Admission: $4.00, adults; $2.00, children 13 to 17. For more information contact: Joe, (727) 244-1341; www.regalrailways.com

New York, Middletown — Greenberg's Train & Toy Show will be held October 31- November 1, at the Orange County Fair Arena, 100 Carpenter Avenue. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: $7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: Staff@Greenbergshows.com; www.greenbergshows.com

North Carolina, Hendersonville — The French Broad e'N'pire NTrak Club will be sponsoring Autumn Rails 2009 Model Railroad Show and Swap Meet on October 10th, at Whitmire Auditorium, located on Lily Pond Lane. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission: $5.00, adults; Scouts in uniform, and children under 13 admitted free. For more information, contact: Chuck Place, 1396 Spicer Cove Rd., Hendersonville, NC 28792; (828) 685-2726; e-mail: hmp3@blueridge.net; www.fbe-ntrak.com

North Carolina, Pisgah Forest — Narrow Trak 09 will be held on October 9-10, at the Transylvania County Recreation Center, 1078 Ecusta Road. Hours will be from 1:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Friday, and from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Saturday. Attractions will include seminars, operating modules, a popular-vote model contest, and music on Saturday night. For a convention package, send an SSAE to: Narrow Trak 09, 11 Owen St., Ste. 104MW, Brevard, NC 28712-7725; or e-mail: plans@citcom.net

Ohio, Greenville — The All Trains Bunch will be having an All Train Flea Market on September 13th, at Darke County Fairgrounds Coliseum, 800 State Route 49. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $3.00, adults; under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Larry Zeller, 1215 Camaro Court, Piqua, OH 45356; (937) 773-7186.

Ohio, Sugarcreek — Old Eli's Train and Toy Show will be held on October 31st, at Valley View Church, 2772 Simons Drive N.W. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission: $3.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Galen Eli Hoover, P.O. Box 45, Mount Hope, OH 44660; (330) 763-1184.

Ohio, Troy —The Darke Co. Model Railroad Club will be having a Model Railroad Show - Swap Meet on October 4th, at the Miami County Fairgrounds Youth Bldg., 650 N County Road 25-A. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $3.00, adults; under 12 admitted free. Refreshments will be available, and the building is handicap accessible. For more information, call: Joe Worz, (937) 337-0011; or e-mail: josephbw@embarqmail.com

Pennsylvania, Allentown — The Great Lehigh Valley Train Meet will be held on September 12-13th, at Merchants Square Mall, 1901 S. 12th Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include over 12,000 square feet of model trains, parts, railroadiana, operating layouts, door prizes, and more. Admission: $5.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free with an adult. For more information, contact: Valley Rail Promotions, P.O. Box 64, Coplay, PA 18037; (610) 440-0487; www.valleygoto.com

Pennsylvania, Leesport — The Reading Company Technical & Historical Society will be holding their 30th Annual Train Meet on October 4th, at the Leesport Farmers Market, located on Route 61. Hours will be from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Attractions to include trains of all sizes, railroadiana, and an outdoor flea market, in addition to the nearby Reading Railroad Museum in Hamburg. Admission: $4.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free with adult. For more information, contact: Dale Miller, c/o RCT&HS, P.O. Box 15143, Reading, PA 19612-5143; (610) 372-3759.

Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh — The Mount Troy Volunteer Fire Co. Train and Toy Show will be held on October 18th, at the Banquet Hall, 33 Lonsdale Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Attractions will include operating layouts, trains, and toys for sale, refreshments, and raffles. Admission: $6.00, adults; children 15 and under admitted free with paid adult. For more information, contact: Richard Luksik, (412) 321-2114.

Pennsylvania, Tamaqua — The PVTA Model Railroad Swap Meet & Sale will be held on October 11th, at the Salvation Army Building, located on West Broad Street, 1/2 block from Reading Station. Hours will be from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Admission: $3.00, adults; under 12 admitted free. For more information, call: (570) 645-9133, or (570) 952-7843; or e-mail: trainnut@ptd.net; or hardcoalman@hotmail.com

Texas, Fort Worth — The Lockheed Martin Recreation Association's 27th Annual Railroad Show will be held October 10-11th, at Lockheed Martin Recreation Association, 3400 Bryant Irvin Road. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include modular layout displays, model circus displays, Thomas The Tank kids layout area, the LMRA Railroad Club's permanent 1200 square ft. HO scale layout, and over 190 dealer tables. Admission: $7.00, adults; children 10 and under admitted free. For more information, contact: Robert Bray, 1820 Spruce Ln., Benbrook, TX 76126; (817) 713-6887 from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. CST; e-mail: brayrLja@sbcglobal.net

Texas, Temple — The Central Texas Area Model Railroaders will be hosting their 27th Annual Temple Model Train Show on September 19-20th, at the Frank Mayborn Convention Center, 2 N. Main Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions will include model railroad exhibits, a swap meet, videos, door and raffle prizes, and how-to clinics. Admission good for both days: $5.00, adults; children 12 and under admitted free with an adult. Discount for seniors, active duty military, and their dependents. For more information, e-mail: trainshow@centramod.org; or visit: www.centramod.org

Virginia, Fredericksburg — Greenberg's Train & Toy Show will be held October 24-25th, at the Fredericksburg Expo & Conference Center, 2371 Carl D. Silver Parkway. Show hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Show will feature a huge marketplace of train, toy, and hobby dealers, operating model railroads, and instructional presentations. Admission: $7.00, adults good for both days; children under 12 admitted free. For more information, contact: Greenberg Shows, P.O. Box 34, Elmhurst, IL 60126; (630) 279-4087; e-mail: Staff@Greenbergshows.com; www.greenbergshows.com

Virginia, Virginia Beach — Tidewater Division Model Railroaders' 20th Annual Train Show and Sale will be held September 19-20th, at Virginia Beach Convention Center, 1000 19th Street. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. both days. Attractions will include operating trains in various gauges, Lego trains, test tracks, train doctors, Operation Lifesaver, train sets, scenery supplies, books, videos, track, memorabilia, tools for sale, and white elephant tables. Scouts may work toward a merit badge in model railroading. Door prizes will be drawn every hour. Admission: $7.00, adults; children under 12 admitted free with an adult; Scouts in uniform with scout leaders in uniform admitted free. $1.00 from every paid admission will go to "Toys For Tots." For more information, call: (757) 426-2811; e-mail: nawneycreek@msn.com; visit the division web site: http://nmra-mer-tidewater.org; or view a map at: http://virginiabeach-conventioncenter.com

Washington, Vancouver — The Southwest Washington Model Railroaders will be celebrating their 36th Annual Great Train Swap Meet on October 3rd, at Hudson's Bay High School, 1206 E. Reserve Street (located just north of the I-5 Bridge at Exit 1-C on Mill Plain Blvd.). Hours will be from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Attractions to include an operating HO gauge layout of the Columbia Gorge, and over 125 tables with vendors from all over the Northwest. Admission: $4.00, adults; $2.00, students; children under 6 admitted free with paid adult. For more information, call: Richard Renihan, (360) 892-3410; e-mail: rlrenihan@msn.com; or visit: www.swwamodelrailroaders.com

Wisconsin, Eau Claire — The 8th Annual Indianhead Model Railroad Club Show and Sale will be held October 10-11th, at Regis High School, 2100 Fenwick Avenue. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Attractions to include: sellers, displays, and operating layouts in O, HO, N, Z, and T scale. Admission: $5.00, adults; 12 and under admitted free with adult. $1.00 off admission with non-perishable food donation to Food Bank. For more information, contact: Andrew Doney, (715) 559-0380; e-mail: awdoney@sbcglobal.net

Wisconsin, Madison — The NMRA, Midwest Region, South Central Wisconsin Division's monthly meeting will be held on September 13th, at Fitchburg Community Center, 5510 Lacy Road. Meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. Program to include live clinics, model and photo contests, door prizes, and home layout viewing. For more information, contact: SCWD, 3015 Union St. #4, Madison, WI 53714; www.nmra-scwd.org

Oct. 24 & 25 • HINGHAM, MA
FALL SHOW & OPEN HOUSE
SOUTH SHORE MODEL RAILWAY CLUB
PO Box 170
Bare Cove Park, Building 51
19 Fort Hill St.
Hingham, MA 02043-0170
781-740-2000 • Fax 781-740-8900 • www.ssmrc.org
SPRING SHOW & OPEN HOUSE March 20 & 21, 2010

As a courtesy to our readers, we have compiled an index featuring every product reviewed in the pages of MRN over the past year. We hope you find it useful.

August 2009

Project DCC, Part 11: Automated Computer Control using Panel Pro, Layout Commander, and Train Controller
Aristo-Craft (RCC) Train Engineer Revolution
Athearn (N) Husky Stacks, FP45/F45 with Tsunami Sound, & (HO) CF-7 with Flat Roof
Atlas (HO) Alco HH600/660 Diesel Locomotive
Intermountain (N) EMD FP7 & F7B
Tahoe Model Works (HO) Replacement Railroad Trucks
Piko (HO) Glassworks Complex Structure Kits
Signature Press (Book) *Billboard Refrigerator Cars*
Walthers (HO) Proto 2000 Heritage USRA Mallet
Woodland Scenics (HO) Drive 'N Dine Built 'N Ready Structure

July 2009

Project DCC, Part 10B: Manual Computer Control with Layout Commander & Train Controller
American Limited Models (N) Sand Tower
Blair Line (N) A to Z Used Car Lot Kit
ExactRail (N) Hy-Cube, Vert-a-Pac & Covered Hoppers
Lionel (O) UP Heritage Scheme SD70ACe Diesel Locomotive
Marklin (HO) *Rheingold Express* & Central Station Command Station
Micro-Trains (N) SP C-50-9 Caboose
Walthers (HO) GP15-1 Diesel Locomotive & Diesel Tug and Car Float Kits
Vollmer (HO) Jeep Wrangler Rubicon
Woodland Scenics (G) Whistle While He Works Figure Set

June 2009

Project DCC, Part 10A: Manual Computer Control with Panel Pro & STP
Athearn (N) Overland Passenger Cars & (HO) F45/FP45
Atlas O & NCE (O & DCC) 2-Rail O-Scale Primer
Blair Line (N & HO) Section House Kit
Bridgewerks Mini-Mag 3-S DC Power Controller
Hayes Publishing (Book) *Western Pacific Depots and Stations*
Kato (N) Pennsy NW2 Switchers
Pennsylvania Heritage Models (HO) Track Cover System
Piko (G) Qwik Kit Structure Kits
Rivarossi (HO) 60-Foot Passenger Cars
River Point Station (HO) Ford Expedition

May 2009

Project DCC, Part 9B: Using Your PC to Control Your Layout
Athearn (N) PS-1 Double Door Boxcars & (HO) Spine Car Set
Atlas O (O) Amtrk Dash 8 & Horizon Passenger Cars
Bachmann (Fn3) 2-6-6-2 Steam Locomotive
Banta (O) Inspection Cab kit for Bachmann 4-4-0
Broadway Limited (HO) Paragon2 C60AC Diesel Locomotive
Busch (HO) *Ape* Delivery Truck & *Smart ForTwo* Car
ExactRails (HO) Gondola, Hy-Cube, & Vert-A-Pack, Plus Interview
Kato (N) EMD E8/E9 Diesel Locomotive
Southcoast Scale Models (HO) Samuel J. Rizzler Paper Co. Kit

April 2009

Project DCC, Part 9A: Computer Control Introduction
Athearn (HO) Genesis SD60M Diesel Locomotive
CMW (HO) Utility Truck
Charles Smiley (DVD) *Your Colorful Southern Pacific*
Kato (N) *Broadway Limited* Passenger Car Set & Add On
MTH (O) Premier Line Dash 8 Diesel Locomotive
Micro-Trains (Z) ACF Passenger Car Set
Piko (Large) Garden Train Set
Rivarossi (HO) 4-8-8-4 *Big Boy* Steam Locomotive
Sunset Models (HO) Brass SP Mogul Steam Locomotive
Walthers (N) Cornerstone Sanding Tower Kit & (HO) *Hiawatha* Set Conclusion

March 2009

Project DCC, Part 8 Integrating a Grade Crossing
Aristo-Craft (L) 2-Bay Hopper
Atlas (N) Code 65 True-Track & (HO) Covered Hopper
Bachmann (On30) Railbus and Trailer & (Book) *E-Z Model Railroads*
Banta (HO, S & O) Railroad Signs
Bar Mills (HO & O) Gas Stop
Bluford Shops (N) Auto Boxcars
Broadway Limited (HO) 2-10-2 Steam Locomotive
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USA Trains (1:29) *Docksider* 0-6-0T Steam Locomotive

February 2009

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Kato (N) Southern Pacific PA-1 & PB-1 Diesel Locos & GG1 Electric Locomotive
Lenz (DCC) Lenz Set-100 Starter Set Upgrade
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Piko (1:22.5) Taurus Locomotive
Seivers Benchwork (ALL) Benchwork Section Kits
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January 2009

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Signature Press (Book) *Southern Pacific Freight Cars, Vol 5*
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December 2008

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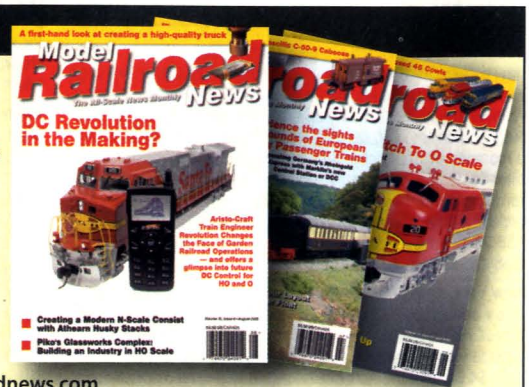

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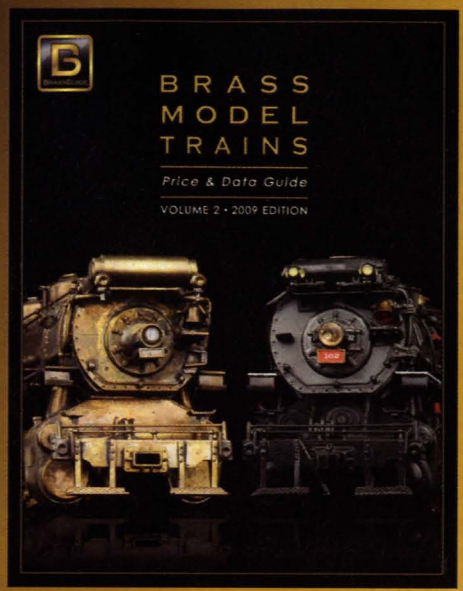

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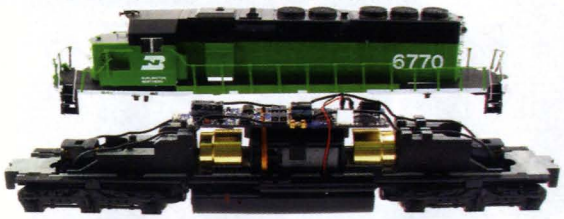

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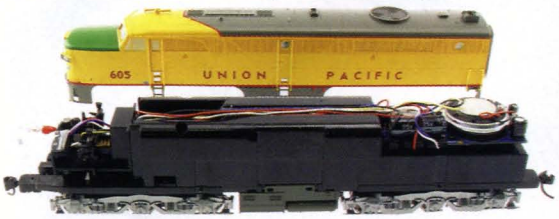

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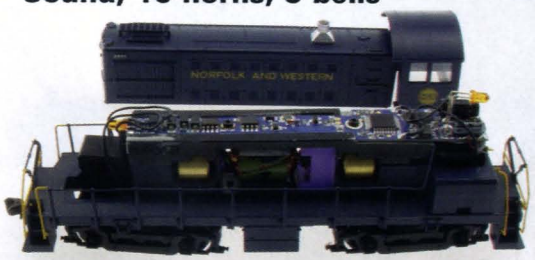

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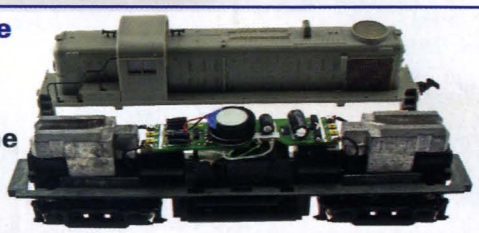

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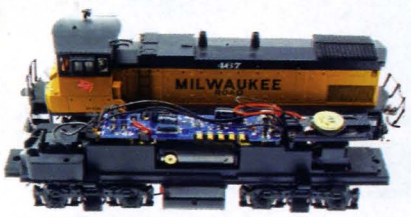

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